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King awards

Betty Brown-Chappell, an Eastern Michigan University professor from Canton, and U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich) were presented with the University's Martin Luther King, Jr. Humanitarian Award Jan. 16 during EMU's annual MLK Day President's Luncheon.

The award recognizes individuals from within Eastern and the community who exemplify the values and ideals of Dr. King, such as leadership and service.

Brown-Chappell, a professor of social work, has more than 30 years of experience both as a faculty member and administrator in higher education.

Blood drives

The American Red Cross hosts the following blood drives in the area:

- Monday, Feb. 6, 1-6:45 p.m. in St. John's Episcopal Church, 574 Sheldon Road, Plymouth.
- Sunday, Feb. 12, 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. in First Presbyterian Church, 701 Church, Plymouth.
- Sunday, Feb. 12, 8 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. in Our Lady of Good Counsel, 47650 N. Territorial, Plymouth.
- Thursday, Feb. 16, 1:30-7:15 p.m., Lou LaRiche, 40875 Plymouth Road, Plymouth. To make an appointment at any of the above drives, call Diane Risko at (313) 549-7052 or e-mail riskod@usa.redcross.org. Walk-ins will be taken when possible.

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Yack back
Former supervisor weighs township board run

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

In a move that could jolt Canton's political landscape, former township Supervisor Tom Yack confirmed Friday that he is strongly leaning toward a campaign for a part-time township trustee seat.

"I'm definitely contemplating, considering it," Yack said, putting his chances of becoming a

candidate at "80 percent."

Yack chose to end his 20-year stint as Canton's longest-serving supervisor in late 2008, ushering in a new era led by township Supervisor Phil LaJoy.

Yack, 65, expects to decide by mid-April if he will seek a four-year term as trustee. He said he is considering an election bid amid hopes of bringing his expertise to the board as it continues to

face financial and other challenges.

"In general, the township board and administration have done a very admirable job of dealing with financial issues," he said. "They've weathered the storm well and retained all the assets in Canton that make people choose Canton over other communities."

Valuable asset
Yet he said his



Longtime Canton Supervisor Tom Yack and his wife, Barb, were surrounded by friends and supporters at Yack's 2008 retirement party. Now he's considering a run for township board.

strengths in economic and residential development could prove valuable as Canton gradually rebounds from a downturn that has plagued Michigan and the nation.

"It's certainly not going to be like the boom years when we had 1,200 or 1,300 building permits a year," Yack said, "but we

Please see YACK, A6



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Court Reporter Carol Richardson worked for years for former Chief Judge John MacDonald before his retirement three years ago.

Court adjourned
Reporter takes memories of 27 years into retirement

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

She watched the old 35th District Court burn, kept meticulous records of heart-wrenching crimes, taught fledgling colleagues the ropes and spent most of her career working for a judge who seemed like a father after she lost her own.

Memories abound and emotions are running high as Canton resident Carol Richardson prepares to retire Tuesday and end a 27-year career as the longest-serving court reporter ever for Plymouth-based 35th District Court.

"I love my job," Richardson, 58, said as she sat in her third-floor office. "I love the people I work with. Every day is a different challenge. Every day is a different reward. I've grown from a child to a woman here. My lessons in life came from working in this court."

Her departure as chief court reporter and secretary to Judge James Plakas has saddened her friends and colleagues.

"This is a sad, sad day in



Carol Richardson has seen big changes with new technologies in court reporting. She retires Tuesday as the longest-serving court reporter in 35th District Court history.

my life," said Kay Jasin, a decade-long court reporter for Judge Michael Gerou. "I came here from a law office with no court experience. Carol taught me everything I know. She is my best friend."

Followed a judge
Richardson, daughter of

Lorraine Paterson and the late Thomas Paterson, grew up in Redford and was a 1971 graduate of Bishop Borgess High School. She spent four years attending Henry Ford Community College and the University of Michigan-Dearborn, earning her legal assistant degree.

Richardson worked seven years for then-attorney John MacDonald and served with him during his 24 years as a 35th District Court judge before he retired three years ago.

"Carol is a very competent individual. She's loyal and reliable," MacDonald said. "She's a fine person."

Plakas recalled how Richardson helped him when he succeeded MacDonald. Plakas had times he would have forgotten to impose court fines if she hadn't reminded him.

"She was crucial to my transition from attorney to the bench," he said.

Richardson's duties have involved keeping a verba-

Please see REPORTER, A6

**District
expands TAG
program**

By Brad Kadrich
Observer Staff Writer

Facing growing competition from charter schools and with a record number of students applying, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools administrators are expanding the district's Talented and Gifted program for the 2012-2013 school year.

The decision comes as the results of a recently commissioned survey shows some 83 percent of people surveyed said they would

Board apologizes, A3. consider enrolling their child in Plymouth-Canton schools if the district offered a TAG program housed in a single location.

Plymouth-Canton's program currently houses some 147 students at Miller Elementary in Canton and another 176 middle schoolers at East Middle School in Plymouth.

"There are always people interested in the TAG program," said Jeanne Farina, the district's assistant superintendent for instruction. "We're interested in opening (TAG) up and making it available to more students."

While the district has decided to expand the program for the upcoming school year, many of the logistics of such an expansion are waiting on the results of the Plante & Moran CRESA study into facility usage.

CRESA officials are on the agenda for a special Thursday, Feb. 2 Board of Education meeting, where they are expected to recommend closing at least one elementary school and other

Please see TAG, A2

TAG TIMELINE

- Feb. 6:** Nomination deadline
- Feb. 2:** The second of two parent meetings, 6:30 p.m., Miller Elementary School, 43721 Hanford in Canton
- Feb. 27-March 16:** Phase I of TAG Screening, cognitive abilities test and Iowa Test of Basic Skills.
- By April 5:** Parents notified as to whether or not their student is eligible for Phase II of TAG Screening. Eligible students scheduled to take the Phase II TAG aptitude test.
- April 21 & April 28:** Phase II of TAG screening: Eligible students will be assigned to one of these Saturday test dates.
- Early May:** All Phase I and Phase II screening information reviewed by TAG Selection Committee.
- By May 11:** TAG placements offered.
- May 24:** TAG Orientation.

Finance chief leaving Canton post

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

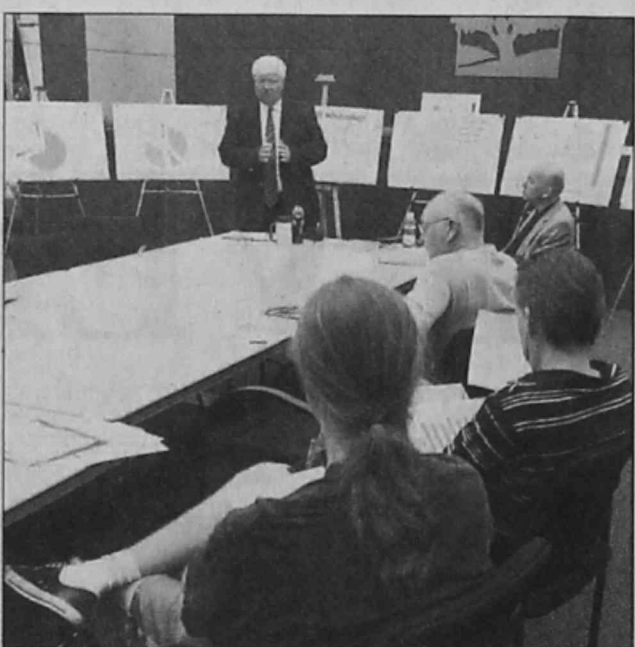
Canton Finance Director Rick Eva has confirmed he will leave his job Feb. 29 — a decision that makes him the fifth high-ranking township official to depart since late August.

"I'm retiring," Eva said. His remarks came as Supervisor Phil LaJoy confirmed Thursday that Canton has hired a new human resources manager to replace Dave Medley, who retired in late December and ended a 21-year run.

LaJoy named Gwyn Belcher, director of administrative services for the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority, as Medley's successor. She was among three finalists for the post and starts her new job Feb. 6.

Eva, meanwhile, steered Canton's finance department for just over five years during a career that spanned more than three decades.

LaJoy said Eva's expertise has proved valuable as Canton, while facing financial challenges, adopted cost-cutting and revenue-raising mea-



Canton Finance Director Rick Eva, here leading an explanation of water rates, is leaving the township after five years heading up the finance department.

sures to combat what had once loomed as a potential \$15 million deficit.

"He did a great job during a very difficult time, and he really helped us get through it," LaJoy said, though "we're still going through it."

Canton, like other communities, has faced declining tax revenues as property values plummeted.

LaJoy confirmed that 14 potential candidates

have applied for Eva's position, and a three-member panel expects in coming weeks to begin interviewing as many as six finalists.

The panel includes Belcher, township Trustee John Anthony and Livonia Finance Director Mike Slater. LaJoy is hopeful Eva's successor can be named by mid-February, allowing for a transition before Eva departs.

Belcher, meanwhile, had responsibility over the administration and evaluation of YCUA's human resources component, including union employees, LaJoy said.

Belcher, a resident of Ypsilanti Township, has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Michigan. LaJoy said she also has earned a ranking as senior professional from Michigan's Human Resources Certification Institute.

"I think she's going to fit in very, very well," LaJoy said, "and we will do everything we can to



Eva

make her successful." Eva's impending departure brings to five the number of high-ranking township officials to leave since late August.

LaJoy said there's no overriding reason why several employees left within a short span. Some locked in their retirement and took other jobs; at least one simply found a more lucrative opportunity.

Those who have left include:

- Medley, who retired as human resources manager in late December after a 21-year stint.
- Township Attorney Audrey Robinson, who left in November for a higher-paying job as vice president of government relations for Southfield-based R.L. Polk, an automotive data and marketing solutions company.

Robinson has been replaced by Kristin Kolb, who came from the Michigan firm of Secrest Wardle with experience in municipal law.

• Township Engineer Tom Casari, who retired from Canton in mid-September and took a similar job in Northville Township. His duties were split between Bill Serchak, engineering services manager, and Bob Belair, public works manager.

• Public Works Superintendent Mike Karll, who ended his 35-year career in Canton in late August to accept a position in Plymouth Township. Belair has taken on the bulk of Karll's duties.

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(313) 222-2238

TAG

Continued from page A1

options for redistricting and possibly restructuring schools.

"Do we go to one building or multiple buildings, what do we offer ... It's going to entirely depend on (CRESA)," said Tim Schoenherr, director of innovative programs. "A lot of things will have to be aligned after the board makes its decisions (on CRESA's recommendations)."

The expanded TAG program is one of several initiatives the district is considering as it competes with area charter and private schools for students. While 83 percent of the respondents to the EPIC/MRA survey on programming said they send their children to Plymouth-Canton schools, the other 17 percent do not. Of that 17 percent, 7 percent said they send their children to charter schools.

One of the reasons for that, according to the survey, is "quality of education," which has district officials considering ways they can both convince parents they actually do have a challenging curriculum and, at the same time, offer programs that will attract more students.

Of the 17 percent who said they said their children to other schools, 91 percent said they would consider moving to Plymouth-Canton Schools if the district offered a TAG program located in one building, while 97 percent

said they'd consider P-CCS if the district offered training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

That's why the district is considering a magnet school for TAG, STEM and business academies, and an international baccalaureate program.

And it's all because of the pressure of outside competition.

"Our enrollment has peaked, partly because of a declining birth rate, but from competition, as well," Schoenherr said. "This is definitely a response to that competition."

While officials admit the expansion of TAG, and the possible creation of the other academies, is one direct response to the impact of charter schools on P-CCS enrollment, Schoenherr said there's also a bigger-picture element to the potential changes.

"I think this has a lot to do with (the idea) education needs to be different, because we're educating kids for jobs that don't even exist yet," he said.

"The emphasis is on jobs that are there now, but it will also get students ready for jobs that will be there in the future."

"We have a global marketplace," Schoenherr added. "For us to offer an International Baccalaureate program ... it's hugely important for students for whom that is a fit. We need to make the world bigger for our kids."

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AROUND CANTON

SLAVENS COFFEE

Date/Time: Monday, Jan. 30, 8-9 a.m.

Location: Belleville Charhouse, 524 Main in Belleville.

Details: State Representative Dian Slavens (D-Canton) invites residents to join her for a cup of coffee and conversation at her upcoming coffee hour. Slavens hosts regular coffee hours and town hall meetings throughout Canton Township, Belleville and Van Buren Township.

Contact: Call toll free at (888) 347-8021 or send an e-mail to DianSlavens@house.mi.gov; sign up for her newsletter and see her website at www.slavens.housedems.com.

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Board apologizes, sets meeting

By Brad Kadrich
Observer Staff Writer

The Plymouth-Canton Community Schools Board of Education has issued an apology for cutting short the citizens' comment portion of its meeting last week, and has scheduled a special meeting Monday to allow people to speak.

The apology comes two days after the board, at its Jan. 24 meeting, limited the public comment portion of its agenda to 45 minutes, cutting off an estimated 20 citizens waiting to speak and violating the Michigan Open Meetings Act in the process.

Board vice president Adrienne Davis, who chaired Tuesday's meeting in the absence of board president John Barrett, announced the decision at the beginning of the meeting, which drew yet another large crowd, many of whom were there to talk about the Toni Morrison book, "Beloved."

"The board regrets its actions and will be correcting its Citizen Comment policy in the future," the apology, issued Thursday afternoon, read in part. "The board has scheduled a special meeting ... to provide an opportunity to speak for those who were prevented from doing so (Tuesday)."

District officials said the board was acting on district policy, which says the public comment portion of the agenda is limited to 30 minutes. After several residents com-

SCHOOL BOARD APOLOGY

The Board of Education wishes to apologize to the community for the decision at its January 24 meeting to limit the period of Citizen Comment. The intent of this decision was not to stifle public comment or deny persons the opportunity to speak but to keep the comment period at a reasonable length to allow the Board to conduct its business. Citizen comment has lately occupied a large portion of Board meetings. It has been a difficult task for the Board to balance the desire to hear from the public with its need to conduct school district business.

At the time, the Board believed it was acting appropriately within the framework of its policies, which state that Citizen Comment is to be limited to 30 minutes. The action of the presiding officer in extending this to 45 minutes was an attempt to honor and respect the number of those wishing to speak.

The Board has since learned through its legal counsel that its current policy on Citizen Comment is not legal, that although the Board may limit the time each individual is allowed to speak, it may not limit the total time provided for public comment if by doing so some persons are prevented from speaking.

The Board regrets its actions and will be correcting its Citizen Comment policy in the future. The Board of Education has scheduled a special meeting for Monday, January 30, at 7:00 p.m., at the E. J. McClendon Education Center, to provide an opportunity to speak for those who were prevented from doing so on January 24.

plained and the Open Meetings Act question was raised, district officials consulted with legal counsel, who told officials the policy violated the law.

"It wasn't done knowingly," Davis said. "We made a mistake, and we're moving to correct it. We respect the voices of our residents, and we want to hear from them."

District officials said all of the people who filled out cards at Tuesday's meeting but didn't get to speak were notified individually by staffers. They also said anyone who attends the Monday meeting who wants to speak will be given the chance.

"I welcome their apology and their attempt at correcting the problem," said Tim Roraback of Plymouth, one of the residents denied a chance to speak Tuesday. "I understand the board is under some intense pressure because it's becoming clear this whole book-banning thing is really part of a larger, state-wide scenario that involves politics and commercial gain."

The meeting takes place 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 30, at the E.J. McClendon Education Center on Harvey.

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Schools join Dodson as Bronze winners

By Brad Kadrich
 Observer Staff Writer

Last fall, 16 schools in Michigan were recognized with HealthierUS School Challenge Bronze Award in a national initiative, spearheaded by first lady Michelle Obama, to promote healthier school meals, physical activity and fitness opportunities and nutrition education.

And 15 of those awards were handed out in Plymouth-Canton Community Schools.

With Dodson Elementary leading the way, having earned the same recognition last year, all 16 of the district's elementary schools now hold the Bronze Award.

And, in an appearance before the Board of Education Tuesday Kristen Hennessey, the district's food services chief, said while the success has come at the elementary school, staffers aren't stopping there.

"We started at the elementary schools, because we wanted to change (children's) eating habits early on," Hennessey told board members. "In the secondary schools, the staff embraces changes. They've begun changing the culture at the secondary level, too."

Hennessey said the district applied for the Bronze status for the other 15 elementary schools in November, and received word around the holidays that all 15 of them had been accepted. Last year, current board vice president Adrienne Davis and former vice president Dianne Gonzalez traveled to Washington, D.C., with Hennessey and others to accept the congratulations of First Lady Michelle Obama. There's been no word yet on when the new



A large number of food services staff members, without whom success "would not be possible," according to nutrition chief Kristen Hennessey, were honored at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting.



Plymouth-Canton's director of nutrition services, Kristen Hennessey, told school board members Tuesday all 16 of the district's elementary schools are now Bronze Award winners.

awards will be handed out. Each school gets a banner plus a \$500 check for earn-

ing Bronze Award status. "We're looking at where each school can put that

money back into the program," Hennessey said.

Responding to criticism the district isn't doing enough at the middle schools and high schools, Hennessey pointed out strides are being taken. The district is transitioning into whole grains, french fries have been removed from the menu at the high school — "At the high schools, we don't even use our fryers," Hennessey said — and baking most foods.

Trustee Mark Horvath said he recently popped in for a meal at East Middle School in Plymouth, and noticed behaviors changing from "when I was a Pop Tart kid."

"Your approach to improve behavior is carrying over to the middle schools," Horvath said. "You're doing the right thing by working up. You can't take on the whole change at one time."

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SCHOOL BRIEFS

P-CEP recycling

The Plymouth-Canton Educational Park National Honor Society's Green Team has created a Park-wide recycling system for plastic bottles with the help of Coca-Cola and the Bosch Corporation. NHS will launch a trial program from Jan. 30 to March 9. Bins purchased with corporate grant money will be placed throughout all three high school campuses.

In an average year, nearly 236,000 plastic bottles are thrown in the trash and eventually taken to landfills. Over the trial period, the Green Team strives to reduce the weight of plastic bottle waste by 15 percent. In addition, they hope to increase the recycling of plastic bottles from 0 to 40 percent of purchased amount.

Vision awards

The American Vision Award winners are chosen as the "Best of Show" from all of the artwork entered in this year's Southeastern Michigan Regional Art Competition. Each regional program across the country selects the five most outstanding works of art from their Gold Key recipients. These five young artists represent the region on the national level as American Vision nominees. A national panel selects one of the nominated works from each region as the American Vision Award Recipient for 2012.

Plymouth High School Senior Rachel Rose Bissonnette won four Gold Key Awards for mixed media, Canton High School senior Emily Erley earned two certificates for digital art and Salem High School junior Catherine Morris earned a certificate for drawing.

Talent show

Plymouth-Canton Educational Park band students have planned a variety talent show for the community 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 3, at Salem High School.

Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$6 for adults, \$4 for students and senior citizens. The talent show is comprised of musicians, comedians, dancers, singers and musical groups. The band students organize the annual event as part of their concert band curriculum.

The band is led by director of bands, David Armbruster. The P-CEP Symphony Band will perform as will the P-CEP Wind Ensemble. The award-winning Plymouth-Canton Marching Band also will perform.

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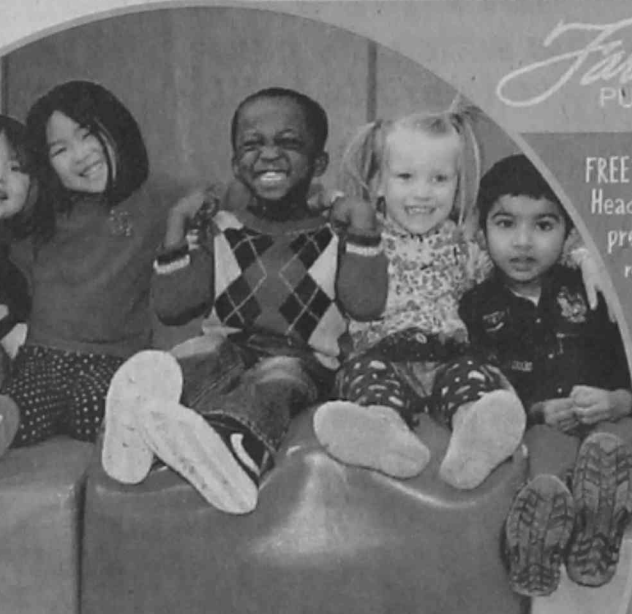
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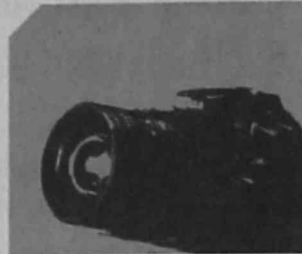
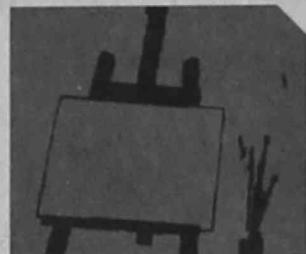
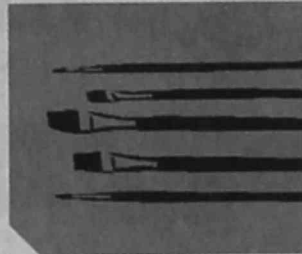
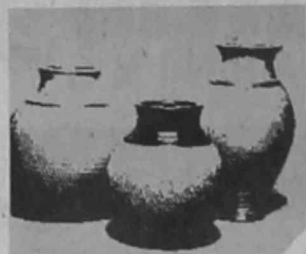
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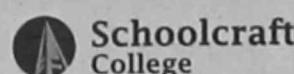
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Man pleads guilty in dragging case

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer



BILL BRESLER
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Rodney Manning of Westland pleaded no contest Thursday to a charge of assault with intent to do great bodily harm.

Manning's plea averted a trial that could have resulted in a much lengthier prison sentence. It comes two months after 19-year-old victim Jahliil Wilson gave horrific testimony during Manning's preliminary examination in 35th District Court.

Wilson accused Manning of twice running over him and dragging him a quarter-mile along Beck Road near Woodlong as he struggled to

survive by clinging to hot pipes underneath the car.

Wilson's testimony indicated the attack last July 2 followed a violent clash outside a house party between two groups of young adults, one of them allegedly affiliated with a gang dubbed Loyalty Before Respect.

Wilson, however, denied he was involved in a gang during an incident that culminated when he was dragged along the road until his buttocks were seared off and his spine was exposed.

"It was just horrible," he testified in November.

Manning had been free on bond as he awaited the outcome of his case in Wayne County Circuit Court. He could have faced penalties ranging up to life in prison if he had been convicted on earlier charges of assault with intent to murder.

Wilson has testified he was among a crowd of 25-30 people who crossed

to the west side of Beck Road after the car driven by Manning parked across the street and one passenger got out with a baseball bat.

Wilson said the houseparty crowd, some of them shouting "LBR" to signify the gang, pelted the car with cinder blocks and rocks, shattering some of the windows.

Wilson testified Manning then drove toward the party, ran off the road, drove over him two times and dragged him along Beck Road as others yelled for him to stop.

Defense attorney Leon Weiss called what happened to Wilson tragic, though he implied Wilson wasn't as innocent as he claimed during what Weiss described as "a brutal attack" by "organized gang activity" against Manning and his passengers.

Weiss accused Wilson of trying to "sanitize his own behavior" during

what Weiss said was "a war type of thing."

Wilson has said his body will never be the same and that he wakes

at night from nightmares caused by the incident.

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CRIME WATCH

Threatening calls

A Canton woman told police she was receiving threatening phone calls from her cousin.

The victim told police the cousin was going to harm her, her children or her aunt.

One text message, according to the police report, said the caller was "going to kill all relatives," and was filled with racial slurs and made more threats.

While police were actually talking to the victim, according to the reports, the suspect called again. The woman put the call on speaker phone, according to the report, and the caller made more of the same kinds of threats and used the same kind of language.

Canton Police requested Washtenaw County sheriff's deputies check on the safety of the aunt, and on the mental health of the caller. According to the report, the caller was transported to University of Michigan Hospital.

Identity theft

A Canton man told police he'd been the victim of identity theft after a local Family Video store called

him to say video games rented in his name were late coming back. The victim told police he hadn't rented any video games.

According to police reports, the victim told police he'd been roommates with the suspect in a Canton Center residence. In early January, he told police, he had asked the roommate to move out. About the same time, he noticed his wallet was missing. The roommate did move out Jan. 10.

The victim got the call about the video games Jan. 15. After calling Family Video, the victim suspected his former roommate of using his identity to rent the games. Police went to the roommate's new residence, according to reports, but he wasn't home. The suspect's brother allowed police to look around, but there was no sign of the games.

Family Video has since transferred the charge to the suspect's account. The victim's landlord subsequently found his wallet in the mud outside his Canton Center residence. The victim told police he'd like to pursue charges against the roommate for identity theft.

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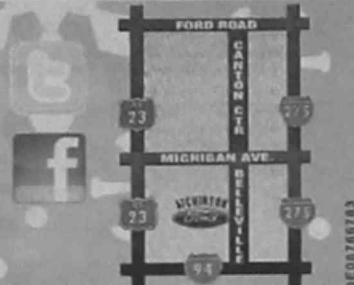
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REPORTER

Continued from page A1

tim record of court proceedings, providing transcripts such as when cases are appealed, working as the judge's secretary and helping attorneys who are trying to reach settlements. She spent almost her entire career with MacDonald.

"He was like a father to me," she said. "He was my rock. He took over when my dad died (15 years ago)."

Helping others

Divorced with no children, Richardson has cherished her ability to help people who found themselves thrust into the court system, and she has gained a wealth of knowledge from her job.

"I love law," she said. One of the most challenging aspects of her job has been complying with a 28-day deadline for providing a verbatim transcript when a case is appealed.

"I've worked many evenings and weekends on transcripts," she said, calling herself "a perfectionist" when it came to grammar and punctuation.

While listening to emotional cases involving child abuse, rape and other violent crimes, Richardson also had the difficulty of making a record of highly technical information. "Some of the medical terminology is really challenging," she said.

She has never forgotten the time she lost all of her court records when an accidental fire destroyed the former 35th District Court in Plymouth in July 1997.

"We stood outside and



Carol Richardson worked for Judge James Plakas the last three years after spending 24 years with former Judge John MacDonald.

watched the building burn," she said. "We had to start from scratch with our records."

Richardson and others worked out of the trunks of their cars, in office space provided by nearby Unisys, in other district courts and, finally, in mobile housing on Plymouth Road, across from where the new court opened three years later.

She vividly remembers entering the new court. "It was so beautiful."

Richardson proudly speaks of 35th District Court. Long before court consolidation became a buzzword, it handled

cases from Plymouth, Northville and the townships of Plymouth, Canton and Northville. It was on the forefront of video-arraignment technology and same-day sentencing.

Court officer Dave Fendele has known Richardson since his days as a Northville police officer.

"She is extremely pleasant and at the top level of efficiency," he said. "She makes my job easier. "She's a good person, and it's going to be a loss when she leaves."

Yet, leave she will come Tuesday. She plans to spend some winter months in Nevada visit-

ing relatives such as her brother, Michael Nawrot, and his three children. She plans to return to her favorite vacation spot, Maui, and she intends to travel to places such as Brazil and Bali.

"I've got the travel bug," she said with a smile.

No matter how far she travels, however, 35th District Court and its employees will remain in her heart.

"It has been a great career," she said. "It's going to be very, very sad to leave."

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YACK

Continued from page A1

still can have sustainable growth in the community. A community that doesn't grow in the future is destined to shrivel up and die."

Yack certainly didn't imply that was Canton's fate, and local officials already have cited encouraging signs of new growth.

Yack's potential candidacy has been rumored in political circles, and he said Friday he has been urged by his friends and supporters to launch a campaign. He said his wife, Barbara, and their family have no qualms about his possible return to politics.

A little early

Trustee Pat Williams, who has become the first candidate to enter the township board race, said it's "premature to endorse or not endorse" any contenders until the entire field of candidates is known.

But, he said Yack "would be a very capable, very qualified candidate — there's no doubt about that."

"Tom brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in terms of the history of Canton," Williams said. "From time to time when we get into discussions about contracts and we question how did we get here, Tom would certainly shortcut that process as a township historian, combined with (Treasurer) Melissa McLaughlin."

Some political observers and local officials chose to refrain from



Yack

comment until it is known with certainty that Yack intends to enter the race.

Yack cited what he called a lack of long-term experience by the board's four part-time trustees.

"There's kind of a deficit of knowledge and background and understanding, and I think I could fill that void," he said.

Williams and Trustee John Anthony are in the last year of their first four-year term, as is Dr. Syed Taj, who already has bowed out of a re-election effort in hopes of toppling U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia.


Taj is the board's only Democrat.


The newest board member, Greg Demopoulos, was appointed in October after former Trustee Todd Caccamo resigned.

Some political observers have privately questioned how Yack, as longtime supervisor, would settle into a part-time trustee role. But he said Friday he clearly understands the legislative role of trustee compared to the full-time duties of supervisor, treasurer and clerk.

Before he became township supervisor, Yack also served on the local library board and the Plymouth-Canton school board.

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No easy answer for when to dump an investment

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

Q: Dear Rick: I'm a few years away from retirement and I've started to become more active when it comes to my investments. I have looked at my investments to see how they've done. When I went through the performance of some of these investments, they've been dogs. My first question to you is what's a fair time frame to judge an investment, and what criteria should I use? I would also like to know if it makes sense to sell a B-share mutual fund before the penalty has expired. I have a few of these funds that I've had for the last three or four years and I want to get rid of them. Should I take the penalty or should I wait another couple of years? A few of my investments that I would like to sell, I was told I can't because of some sort of real estate partnership. Do you have any ideas how to sell those?

A: I think it is great that you're taking a more active role in your investments. I don't care whether you're retiring in 20 years, 20 minutes or

you've been retired for 20 years, it's important to be involved with your investments. First, with regards to the criteria that I use in judging investments, from a pure performance standpoint, I'm judging an investment against other investments in their same category. I'm not going to compare the performance of an emerging market fund to a large company U.S. fund. Rather, I'm comparing funds that are in the same category. That said, generally once I buy a fund, if that fund underperforms others in the same category for a two- to three-year period, that's when I pull the plug. I recognize that good funds and good fund managers sometimes go through periods where they underperform. Just

because a good fund has a bad year doesn't mean I'm going to sell it. It's important to keep in mind that I do extensive research before I buy a fund, therefore, I'm willing to give the manager some leeway.

Generally, when it comes to performance, I give the fund two to three years after I purchase it. That doesn't mean that I would not sell it prior to that if something happens — such as change in the fund's manager or the goals and objectives of the fund. In those situations, I am much quicker at liquidating the fund than I would be purely based on performance.

As to B-share mutual funds, I do not like this type of fund. In a B-share mutual fund, you pay high management fees. In addition, generally if you sell your fund before a five-year period, you have to pay a penalty. These funds are sold under the theory that you don't pay commissions. They are correct in the fact that you don't pay an upfront commission, however, you end up

paying higher management fees year after year. These funds are not investor friendly and, generally, should be avoided. The only people who recommend these types of funds are the people selling them.

In your situation, if the B-share mutual funds that you own have been underperforming, I would have no problem liquidating them before the penalty period is over. After all, if you kept the fund you'd end up paying higher management fees anyway. You are not losing any more by liquidating the fund now.

With regards to your real estate investment, that is a difficult one. Unfortunately, many of these investments are very illiquid. Unlike stocks that you can sell whenever you want, that is not the case with these partnerships. The secondary market for these types of investments is very small. My recommendation is to contact the real estate investment company directly because sometimes these companies have programs where

they will buy back your shares. Of course, in the great majority of those cases, you're going to take a substantial hit, however, it may be worth it just to get rid of the investment.

I've never been a fan of any type of investment that will not allow me to get my money out when I choose to. It's one of the reasons I like mutual funds, because you can liquidate when you want to. You can't do that with many of these real estate investments.

Unfortunately, many people that get involved in these real estate investments don't realize they can't liquidate when they choose. I always recommend that before getting involved with any investment, make sure you know how you can sell it when you want.

Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at moneymatters@hometownlife.com. For more information, visit his website at www.bloomassetmanagement.com.

Canton Public Library hosts book discussions

To foster a sense of community and provide an opportunity for calm conversation, the Canton Public Library will host a book discussion for two book titles whose inclusion in the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools AP English curriculum was recently challenged. "Beloved," by Toni Morrison, will be the featured title of a Feb. 27, 7 p.m.

discussion and "Waterland," by Graham Swift, will be discussed on March 27 at 7 p.m.

"By hosting a discussion of these books, we can give our community a shared experience and promote a dialogue around the perspectives each individual brings from reading the book," said Rebecca Havenstein-Coughlin, department head of adult services. "The

public library is an excellent forum for connecting our community in this manner."

The discussion will be led by library staff and is open to anyone in the Plymouth-Canton community ages 16 and older. Those interested in participating may register

and pick up a copy of the book at the Canton Public Library beginning Jan. 30.

"Beloved," for which Morrison won the 1987 Pulitzer Prize, is described by its publisher, Random House, Inc., as "staring unflinchingly into the abyss of slavery, this spellbinding nov-

el transforms history into a story as powerful as Exodus and as intimate as a lullaby. Sethe, its protagonist, was born a slave and escaped to Ohio, but eighteen years later she is still not free. She has too many memories of Sweet Home, the beautiful farm where so many

hideous things happened. And Sethe's new home is haunted by the ghost of her baby, who died nameless and whose tombstone is engraved with a single word: Beloved. Filled with bitter poetry and suspense as taut as a rope, Beloved is a towering achievement."

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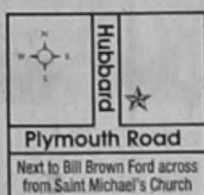
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Politics moves front-and-center in book debate

When Sharon Lollo strode to the podium at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting, no one knew what she was going to do except Lollo herself and (I suspect) other members of her contingent. So when Lollo, a Plymouth resident, started reading excerpts from Toni Morrison's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, "Beloved," it came as a huge surprise to pretty much everyone in the room. It'll come as an even bigger surprise — and not a pleasant one — to any unsuspecting viewers who try to catch the meeting on cable television. The passages Lollo, a leader in the local Tea Party group Rattle With Us, read are the ones that has everyone up in arms, the ones with the explicit language, the ones with

the references to rape and bestiality — the ones with all the "F" words. **Decision** And in that instant Lollo did to every parent in the district exactly what she and the others upset about the use of "Beloved" in the Advanced Placement program claim teachers are doing to them: She took the decision about whether parents want their children exposed to that kind of language out of parental hands and placed it firmly in her own. She got exactly the reaction from the board she wanted when vice president Adrienne Davis asked her to stop using that kind of language in a public setting. Lollo refused, proclaiming — to the delight of her supporters — that if the lan-



Brad Kadrich

guage was good enough for students to read, it was appropriate for a public forum such as a Board of Education meeting. It's a silly idea, of course. Because Lollo — and her supporters — ensured on Tuesday that when Mom and Dad sit down with 10-year-old Johnny to watch the board meeting, and perhaps teach the child a civics lesson, he's going to get a totally different lesson. And, unlike the students in the AP English classes (and their parents, who are warned in advance the course contains mature content), they won't have any choice because Lollo made it for them. Here's the difference: In the AP classroom, which is designed specifically for students ready for more adult challenges, the book is read in a controlled environment by students who have asked to be part of the program and then discussed by education professionals teaching much more overarching principles. The only people being exposed to the book are those who asked to be. Anyone can view the public meeting, including 10-year-old Johnny sitting down with his Mom and Dad. Indeed, there were younger children in the audience when Lollo dropped the bombshell, with no apparent concern for their sensibilities. Someone said teenagers offended by the book are "afraid to make their

opinions known" (I'm paraphrasing). It was an apparent reference to the fact not a single teenager has stepped to the microphone to decry the use of this book, while dozens have made it known they support the program. I've met hundreds of students in all grades and at all academic levels, and I have five children of my own. Here's one thing I've learned: Teenagers have very little trouble speaking their minds, especially teenagers intelligent enough to take part in college-level courses. Their opinions are generally more eloquent, more reasoned and more thought-provoking than anything you hear from adults.

get four guys elected (two of them actually made it). Look at the propaganda handed out before Tuesday's meeting, which is largely about the decline of public education. Everyone is entitled to their opinion, and if Tea Party Republicans think charter and private schools are better options, that's certainly their prerogative. Hard as they're trying, Tea Party activists are not going to bring down public education. They may force change in public education, and change can be a good thing. Critics — of the books, of the district, of some of the former board members — are trying to force their political views on a large contingent of people, whether they want them or not. Lollo had no more right to force that material onto others than the people she claims are restricting her parental rights. The last time I criticized a political party, I got packages of dog feces in the mail three different times. Maybe I better go warn my mail carrier.



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Brad Kadrich is editor of the Plymouth and Canton Observers. He can be reached via e-mail at bkadrich@hometownlife.com or by phone at (313) 222-8899.

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Public Test of the M-100 Optic Scan Voting System For the Presidential Primary Election Tuesday, February 28, 2012
PLEASE TAKE NOTE: A public accuracy test of the M-100 Optic Scan Voting System will take place at 2:00 p.m., on Thursday, February 2, 2012 at the Charter Township of Plymouth, Clerk's Office, 9955 N Haggerty Road, Plymouth, MI 48170, for the February 28, 2012 Presidential Primary Election.
The Public Accuracy Test is conducted to demonstrate that the computer program used to tabulate the votes cast at the election meets the requirements of law.
The public is invited and encouraged to attend.
For further information contact the Clerk's Office. Phone (734) 354-3224.
Joe Bridgman, MMC
Township Clerk
Publish: January 29, 2012

From 278 to 140: Weight loss is woman's health gain

By Julie Brown
Staff Writer

Lori Ward of Westland weighed 278 pounds before having surgery almost four years ago at the Michigan Bariatric Institute affiliated with St. Mary Mercy Hospital in Livonia.

These days, using diet and exercise after the surgery, Ward, 57, is around 140 pounds.

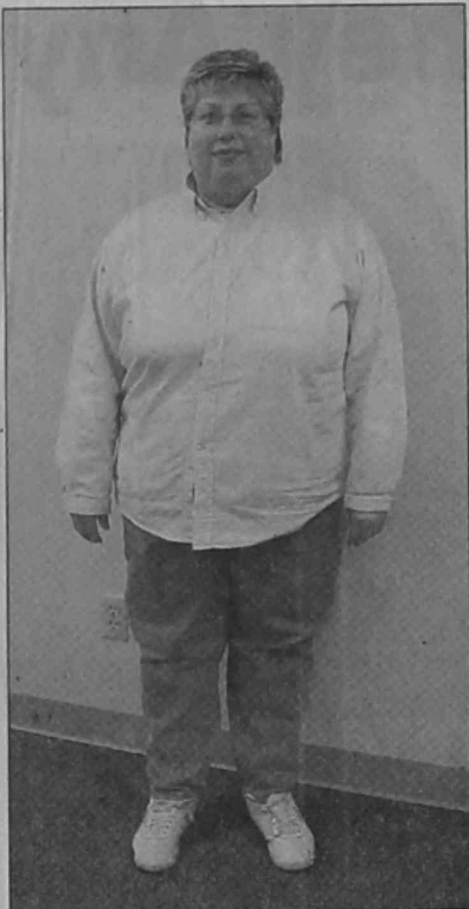
"You have to keep exercising," the former Northville Township resident said. "That's what I find helps me a lot. The more I exercised, the more I felt better."

"Exercise to me is the number one thing you have to do. You've got to keep moving. You just feel better."

Ward works at the Canton dental office of Janis Hayward and Associates, and she has been featured in a recent ad campaign for weight loss through the Michigan Bariatric Institute, part of Trinity Health.

"It's been kind of fun," she said of the recognition. "I get a lot of that from the people who come in here (work). My 15 minutes of fame, basically."

She found her recovery from bariatric surgery smooth, and is confident she'll keep the weight off into her senior years. Ward had begun to put on weight over the 10 years before her surgery, not so much so when her four



Lori Ward started at 278 pounds before her bariatric surgery. "Fabulous" is how she feels now. Ward, 57, works at the Canton dental office of Janis Hayward and Associates.



After surgery and shaping up, Lori Ward was able to do a mini triathlon recently.

now-adult children were born.

"Fabulous," Ward said of how she feels now. "It's a lot better. In 2010, I actually did a mini-triathlon" in Lansing.

Ward swims, runs, works on the elliptical at the gym and does walking and some weights. She appreciates the help of husband Michael and

their four children.

"They were very supportive," she said. "All of them are very happy for me." Her co-workers at the Canton dental office were also a big help.

"I'm a stress eater," explained Ward, who'd dealt with their son having cystic fibrosis and the death of her dad.

Through the Michigan Bariatric Institute — which is on Facebook — Ward worked on her diet even before the surgery as well as after. She attended nutrition classes before surgery focusing on what she was eating. She learned to read food labels as well.

"It's a great program,"

THE SURGERY

There are several types of bariatric surgery, said Jenny Kasprzyk, dietitian for the Michigan Bariatric Institute, which does four of those. The surgery to modify the stomach and digestive system is generally only for patients 100 pounds overweight or more.

Kasprzyk described the "food journal" kept. "Keeping track of what you're eating makes a big difference," the Clinton Township resident said.

That's especially true for bariatric patients but also for those with New Year's resolutions to drop 15 or 20 pounds.

Bariatric patients keep a focus on protein calories, Kasprzyk said, to change metabolism and make sure they're healthy: "We want to make sure we keep up with the proper nutrition."

She agreed it's best to see a doctor before starting a fitness regimen, to determine overall health and ability to work out. "It's kind of that old mantra of 'No excuses.' You just kind of have to break down those walls," said Kasprzyk, who recommends starting small on exercise and building up.

"I think the biggest tip is to find something you enjoy" and will stick with, she said.

As for food calories, Kasprzyk recommends eliminating the high calorie latte-type drinks, which have a lot of sugar and fat. Soda pop also represents empty calories, as does alcohol often consumed during the holidays.

"We tend not to get our water intake," Kasprzyk said. "Those liquid calories can add up very quickly."

She's worked some four years at the Michigan Bariatric Institute, and enjoys seeing patients like Lori Ward achieve normal weight.

"Absolutely," Kasprzyk said. "I think that is the best part of my job to see those transformations. She probably never imagined she'd be where she is today."

Bariatric surgery does have risks for older people beyond Ward's age, Kasprzyk said, but regular weight loss is encouraged at any age. Her grandpa's in his early 90s and family members still talk to him about sugars in food.

"It's never too late," she said of fitness.

she said of work with a dietitian.

Ward was back to work

within 10 days of her surgery, which was covered by her health insurance.

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Few people question the virtues of walking, but what if the person urged to move has arthritis of the hip, knee, ankle or foot? Doctors frequently hear from these patients that they want to exercise more, but cannot because of arthritis in the legs.

That argument has validity but usually not enough to excuse the person from activity. First, other ways to exercise exist. Stationary bikes, swimming, Nordic Track and variations of it are available. However, these alternatives, involve expensive equipment and require a large space, or necessitate paying membership dues to a health club.

Nothing better walking for being inexpensive and except for bad weather or a dangerous neighborhood, being readily at hand.

A person with arthritis can walk because the goal is persistence not pace. The purpose of the exercise is to build stamina and muscle reserve, an end point achieved by a steady pace that one undertakes for a reasonable time such as 20-30 minutes.

Walking with impaired joints also provides the basis for knowing when it is time for a knee or hip replacement. The appropriate moment arrives when the knee or hip begin to fail. Waiting longer until an ambulation becomes painful is too late, as by that time, the person has lost a great amount of muscle strength. In turn the loss will make rehabilitation after joint replacement a difficult task.

The person, who walks daily, will know when the walk changes from a reflection of strength to an experience of strain. Walking acts as a landmark signaling when the time for operation is at hand.

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Farmington Players present 'Whose Wives Are They Anyway?'

Two buddies take a golf trip without their wives, but the new boss shows up and ruins their fun.

Whose Wives Are They Anyway?, is a play loaded with comic high jinks which are "par for the course" on the Farmington Players stage.

The show runs Feb. 17 through March 3 at the Barn Theatre in Farmington Hills.

Teeing off

The fun tees off with John Baker and David McGachen, who unexpectedly encounter their new boss on a golf outing. The only problem is, the golfers are vacation-

ing without their wives, and they learn the boss frowns on men leaving their spouses behind.

The sand trap

They find themselves in sort of a sand trap when the boss invites their wives to dinner and refuses to take "no" for an answer. So the pals scramble to rustle up some "better halves," before they lose their jobs. It looks like the guys will "save par" until their real wives surprisingly show up and all "Hades" breaks loose.

Hole in one

Director Dennis Broad-

head of Royal Oak enjoys any story in which ordinary people create wild solutions to cope with unbelievable circumstances.

"This is an excellent cast," says Broadhead. "With all the current problems in the world today, all the audience needs to do is just relax and have a good laugh at all the silliness that's going on, on stage!"

Broadhead crafts that silliness, by tapping into some of the Farmington Players top comedic talent to pack that stage with plenty of physical fun, tricky timing, crossed phone lines and



JIM KELLY

John Boufford, of Northville Township and Geoff Wehner, of Bloomfield Hills, rehearse a hilarious scene in bed.

cross dressing buffoonery.

Broadhead says, "No matter how many crazy problems life throws at you, just face them and tell the truth. Otherwise, things can get a little out of hand and really get crazy!"

It's a message he is certain will strike a "hole in one" with his audience.

Tickets for *Whose Wives Are They Anyway?* are available now at farmingtonplayers.org or at the box office (248) 553-2955. Questions about the show may be e-mailed to whosewives@farmingtonplayers.org

Show dates
The shows are: at 8 p.m. on: Feb. 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, March 1, 2, 3 and at 2 p.m. on Feb. 19, 26. Tickets are available at both www.farmingtonplayers.org and the box office at (248) 553-2955. Tickets are \$16 adults; students are \$2 off any

performance; Senior Sunday, take \$2 off tickets on Feb. 19; Thrifty Thursday, take \$2 off on Feb. 23 and March 1; group discounts of \$2 off any show with a group of 10 or more.

The Farmington Players Barn is located at 32332 W. 12 Mile Road, Farmington Hills. It's the big white barn on the north side of 12 mile between Orchard Lake and Farmington Road.

The Cast

- John Baker, played by Geoff Wehner of Bloomfield Hills
- David McGachen, played by John Boufford of Northville
- Tina, played by Alisha Gellin of West Bloomfield
- Mrs. Carlson, played by Mary Ann Tweedie of Novi
- Wilson, played by Tony Targan of West Bloomfield
- D.L. Hutchinson, played by Maureen Man-

sfield of Farmington Hills

- Karly McGachen, played by Diana McSweeney of Farmington Hills
 - Laura Baker, played by Laurel Stroud of Redford
 - The crew
 - Director Dennis Broadhead of Royal Oak
 - Assistant Director George Uridge of Farmington Hills
 - Producer-David Reinke of Novi
 - Producer/Set Designer/Construction-Tim Timmer of Wayne
 - Stage Manager-Jill Jones of Southfield
 - Lighting Designer-Frank Ginis of Troy
 - Sound Design-Rachael Rose of Waterford
 - Costumes-Julie Vanderbeek of Ferndale
 - Props/Set Dressing-Kandi Krumins of Farmington Hills
- Find out more about the Farmington Players at www.farmingtonplayers.org and also on Facebook.



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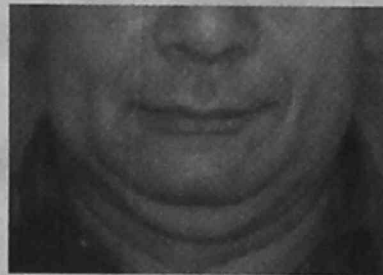
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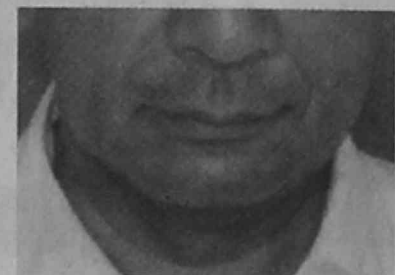
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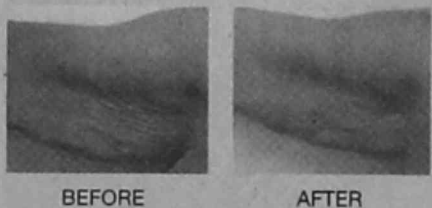


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Actual Testimonial from Kimmy K., Dearborn Heights, MI

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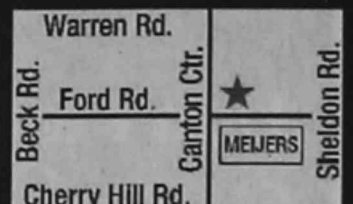


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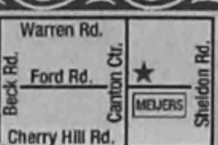
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Glenn girls topple Chiefs

By Brad Emons
Observer Staff Writer

There's plenty of space on the record board up on the wall for girls basketball inside Westland John Glenn's gymnasium.

Any kind of championship has been few or far between for the Lady Rockets, who last captured a divisional crown in 1982.

But 30 years later, that could all change as Glenn took a giant step in winning the KLAA South on Friday night with a hard-fought 42-33 win over nemesis Canton.

The host Rockets improved to 10-2 overall and 6-0 in the South, while the Chiefs slipped to 9-3 and 4-2.

Temple University signee Erica Covile, a senior forward, paced Glenn's scoring attack with 12 points, while junior forward Kierra Jordan chipped in with 11.

Canton, meanwhile, got a game-high 17 points from senior guard Robyn Mack, who was cleared to play the morning of the game by doctors after suffering a concussion the previous Friday against Livonia Franklin.

Although Glenn beat Canton for the second time this season, it was the Chiefs that controlled the tempo.

Glenn jumped out to a 9-2 advantage, but Canton closed to within one after one quarter, 11-10.

In the second period, Glenn once again enjoyed a seven-point lead, only to have the Chiefs cut the deficit to 22-19 at intermission on Shannon Perry's last-second shot.

Mack's three-pointer just 42 seconds into the fourth quarter cut the deficit to 33-29, but the Chiefs simply couldn't get over the hump even though Glenn went scoreless for the first 5:10.

Baskets by ShaKeya Graves (seven points) and Abbey Wright (six points) down the stretch secured the win for the Rockets.

Canton shot only 23.8 percent for the game (10-of-42) and committed 12 turnovers, including four in the fourth quarter.

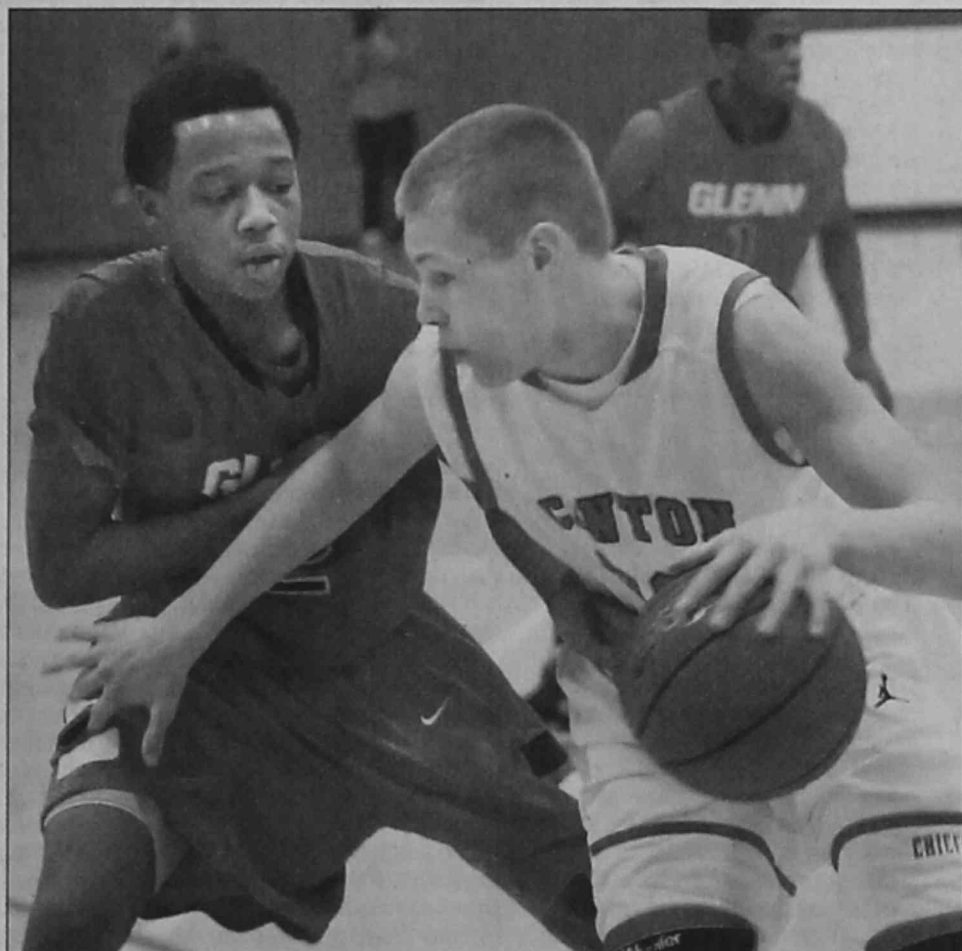
Mack was 4-of-19 from the field, but in her defense, she did not practice all week. She did hit 8-of-9 free throws.

Canton's next best scorer was Paige Aresco with six.

Down to basics

"One of our problems when we get stuck or in a jam, everybody else just kind of stops and stands and watches everyone else," Canton coach Bri-

Please see TOPPLED, B2



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Canton freshman guard Greg Williams (No. 22) tries to dribble past Nick Daniels (No. 2) of Westland John Glenn on Friday night.

Canton rally falls short

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Canton came on like gangbusters during crunch time Friday night against Westland John Glenn in a battle of the top teams in the KLAA South Division.

But the host Chiefs had a long way to come back after a dismal second quarter, when they were outscored 17-2 to fall behind 30-16 at halftime.

Despite a gallant rally in the fourth, which saw Canton come all the way back from a 19-point deficit to catch the Rockets 58-58 with 11 seconds left, it wasn't enough for a victory.

After hot-shooting Kyle Adams evened things up

with a jumper, Nick Daniels sank two free throws with six seconds to play for a 60-58 John Glenn victory.

Roller-coaster ride

"You knew that they were going to bring it all in the second half," said John Glenn head coach Dan Young, who formerly helmed the Chiefs when Canton head coach Jimmy Reddy was a player. "And we told our guys, 'This lead is not safe, we're going to have to guard.' And they made so many clutch shots, some of them with a hand in the face."

Young added that the Chiefs "brought it to another level in the second half. I thought we played, in the

first half, about as good as we can play. Take your hats off to Reddy."

The Rockets improved to 9-2 overall and 6-0 in the KLAA South.

"When you're playing a really good team like Glenn and you don't play a full 32 minutes, it's going to cost you," said Reddy, whose team dropped to 9-3 overall and 4-2 in the division.

He was referring to the second quarter, where the game turned around thanks to the physical play of John Glenn senior forward Eric Covile (22 points, 11 rebounds).

"The second quarter was pretty bad, but it had a lot to

Please see RALLY, B2

PREP WRESTLING

Canton pins loss on 'Cats

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Two Plymouth-Canton Educational Park wrestling rivals got back on the mat Wednesday night at Livonia Churchill.

Canton came away with a 43-24 victory over Plymouth in a precursor to the postseason, when the squads likely will hook up again.

The teams competed as part of a KLAA quad meet.

"This win was nice, but we will see each other again in a few weeks at team districts," Chiefs head coach Cory Mancuso said. "We are going to have to continue to work hard and try to turn a few of the close matches we lost tonight into victories next time around."

Wildcats head coach Quinn Guernsey noted that Canton was "the better prepared team for the dual and we'll have to work hard the next couple weeks if we want to give them a better match (at districts)."

Alec Pantaleo got Canton off to a great start by defeating state qualifier Said Youssef.

Another highlight for the Chiefs came at 189, when Scott Obrec rallied from a 9-4 deficit to pin Matt Ayoub with nine sec-

Please see PINNED, B2

Early goal holds up for Plymouth

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

Plymouth scored early in the first period Friday night and the Wildcats took it from there to win 2-0 in a penalty filled KLAA South Division boys hockey matchup against Canton at Arctic Edge Arena.

Collecting the victory for Plymouth was senior goaltender Rich Guglielmi, who stopped 15 shots.

The Wildcats went up 1-0 just 2:11 into the contest when junior forward Joe Burke jammed the puck past Canton netminder Spencer Craig. Setting up the play was Plymouth forward Zach Gambrell.

"We've had slow starts probably our last seven games and it was just nice to come out of the first period with a lead and some momentum," Plymouth head coach Gerry Vento said.

That lead held up through the second period, with Canton whistled for 11 minor penalties compared to seven penalties by Plymouth.

"Special teams were a factor all the way around," Vento continued. "We killed all their power plays, they killed all ours. And Gugs (Guglielmi) was a monster again in net."

In the third, it only took 1:03 for Plymouth to add to the lead.

With both teams down a man, sophomore forward Mike Schultz streaked down the right wing and sent a sharp, low shot toward Craig with defenseman Jake Zaborowski skating through the slot.

The puck banked in off the goalie for the two-goal lead, which gave the Wildcats much-needed breathing room.

That's how the contest remained until official Andrew Michalak was cut around the eye by a high stick with 8:50 to play. While he was attended to, the contest was delayed for nearly 20 minutes.

Paramedics finally carted him off the ice and took him to a hospital for stitches. It appeared the official was not seriously injured, as he waved to the crowd as he left the rink.

The loss dropped Canton's record to 10-7 overall and 6-3 in the KLAA South while Plymouth improved to 10-7 and 4-5.

Canton head coach Jeremy Majszak said careless penalties were a factor in the loss, which hurt his team's chances for division and conference titles.

"Regardless of what's being called or who you're playing against, you have to adjust. We were undisciplined, we didn't play with our brains tonight."

tsmith@hometownlife.com | (734) 469-4128

Loss doesn't dampen Salem's team spirit

By Tim Smith
Observer Staff Writer

One of Salem's co-captains didn't like how Thursday's "Senior Night" dual meet against Northville was progressing and he let his teammates know about it.



Griwicki

"I had a talk with the team around halftime, because they were getting embarrassed pretty bad," said senior Jeremy Wellman following the KLAA Central Division dual meet at Salem. "I just tried to get them all to come out and swim hard in the second half."



Salem's Turner Solterman, shown from earlier this season, was part of the 200-yard freestyle relay team that finished second Thursday against Northville.

The Rocks did finish with more gusto, although they were not able to

defeat the defending

Please see SWIM, B3



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Local moms turn creative card ideas into cash

By Sharon Dargay
 O&E Staff Writer

Kim Murray of Livonia has what it takes to help you flirt with your sweetie this Valentine's Day — a smiling power strip, happy electrical plug and catchy words of love.

They all came together on the Hallmark Valentine's Day card that she designed for an online competition. Her winning contest entry, sporting a cartoon of the love-smitten electrical devises, is being sold at Hallmark stores and at other retailers that carry the brand.

"You had to create a fun or flirty card — for him, for her or for anyone. Two of mine won," Murray said. "What they do is they pick winners, maybe 20. And from there they pick maybe 10 store winners. We found out in November that one of my cards is a store winner."

The card went on sale earlier this month. Her two other winning entries into the greeting card giant's monthly design challenge — another valentine and belated birthday wishes — are available at Hallmark.com. Murray will learn this spring if the birthday card, which sports a photo of a banana with googly eyes, will be released into stores in June.

Erika Laszlo's winning birthday card also has a shot at earning a spot on store shelves. The Garden City woman, like Murray, entered Hallmark's "Watch What You Say ... Again" competition that challenged designers to create birthday cards without using the words "special," "party," and "old."

Her photo card is being sold at Hallmark.com.

"I submitted a hilarious picture of my daughter staring at a cupcake. Outside is just the picture. Inside it says 'as soon as they are done singing, it's just you and me, cupcake,'" said Laszlo, describing her winning entry. "I was so shocked when they called me. I have submitted quite a few times over the last seven or eight months. Every month is a different theme. This is the first time I've ever won."

Avid designers

Both women are self-taught artists and tend to design cards with photos, rather than illustrations.

Laszlo, 41, grew up in Dearborn, is married to Bryan and has two children, Sophie, 6 and



Erika Laszlo of Garden City used a photo of her daughter, Sophie, on her winning entry into a Hallmark greeting card competition. One of her other entries sported a photo of her son, Ethan, (right).



Kim Murray of Livonia shows off some winning valentines in Hallmark's card competition. Her cards have been chosen for sale online and in Hallmark stores.

Ethan, 10. She worked as a director of medical equipment at Garden City Hospital for nearly 20 years before taking a job with the University of Michigan's Cardiovascular Center as a physician liaison.

"It's funny because I'm very much into photography. I really enjoy taking pictures of the kids. I always have a camera in my hands," said Laszlo, who uses a digital Cannon SLR.

Laszlo told her daughter that her photo is on a Hallmark card, but isn't certain if Sophie has thought much about it.

"She doesn't seem to be overly excited. I think I'm more excited."

Laszlo said she may submit another design this spring. She jots down ideas for both sentiment and images while at home or while driving.

From radio to candles

Murray, 41, won her

first competition — and a Schwinn bike — when she was 10, by submitting a drawing of Toucan Sam, the Froot Loops icon, to a Kellogg's contest.

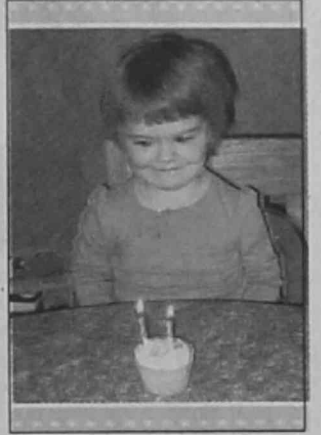
She took pottery classes during her years at Churchill High School and ended up working in radio at WNIC 105.1 FM after graduating from Specs Howard School of Media Arts. She traded radio for candles and sold PartyLite products for 14 years before becoming an independent consultant for Scentsy, a company that sells flameless candles.

She stumbled on the Hallmark contest site last year after getting active in blogging. Her first entry, for a challenge involving photos of food, didn't make the cut. Her second try, for the valentine competition, turned up two winners.

"Since I have the perfect soulmate, that was easier," she said. Murray and her husband,



Kim Murray of Livonia took a light-hearted approach to designing her Hallmark card. Her husband and sons named the banana used on the card, 'Bentley.' Murray also bought several 'understudy' bananas just in case the original didn't brown in the right places.



Erika Laszlo of Garden City used a photo of her cupcake-loving daughter, Sophie, on the card she designed for Hallmark's contest.

and inside sentiment reads "I feel just rotten about it."

"That banana was so stinking cute, but I wanted him to be more spotty," Murray said. "I couldn't speed up the rotting any quicker, so I went to Meijers and got four 'understudies.' They weren't as cute."

Meanwhile, her husband and sons named the original banana, "Bentley." After searching for "the perfect banana" with just the right about of brown spots, Murray photographed Bentley and submitted her design to Hallmark. The overly-ripe fruit ended up in the trash and she ended up with a win.

Hallmark receives thousands of entries for each monthly challenge. Winners receive \$250 and get an additional \$250 if the card is selected for sale in stores. For more information visit www.hallmark.com.

Jim have been married 17 years and have three boys, ages 13, 9 and 5.

"My husband and I brainstorm sometimes, so he can enter, too."

His birthday card with a photo of their 13-year-old son at age 5, won one of the challenges last year and has been sold online.

"I helped him with the words. He took the picture. I said, 'you can have that card.' He won on that one, which was cool."

Bentley the banana

The entire family weighed in on her last card design, the winning entry that shows a googly-eyed banana with body parts made from flexible toy building sticks called Bendaroos. The phrase under the photo says "Your birthday slipped past,"

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Energetic pup



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Learn meditation, alleviate stress

Schoolcraft College will offer a series of meditation classes, beginning Monday, Jan. 30 and again on Monday, March 19, to help individuals achieve a sense of calm and control.

Present Moment Meditation is designed to give students a lighthearted, practical approach that makes meditation inviting and beneficial for everyone.

Each series includes four classes that will run from 6-7:30 p.m. on the college's main campus, located on Haggerty between Six Mile and Seven Mile, in Livonia.

Each meeting includes two meditations, a short presentation on topics relating to meditation and stress reduction, discussion and question and answer time.

Classes are aimed at helping students see positive results in their work, family life, home, health, relationships, personal goals, and more. Registration is under way. For more information on the mediation classes or Schoolcraft's Continuing Education and Professional Development program, visit www.schoolcraft.edu/cepd or call (734) 462-4448.

Go Red campaign seeks national spokesperson

Tell your story about heart health Saturday, Feb. 4 at Macy's in Westland and you'll get a chance to become a national spokesperson for the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women campaign.

The Go Red CONNECT casting call runs from 10 a.m.-noon at the store, located at Westland Mall, 35000 W. Warren Road.

Alexis Wiley of FOX 2 News will kick off the search for the next spokesperson at the event and online at GoRedForWomen.org. The national winner will represent the campaign in marketing materials, at events, and on its Web site.

In addition to Wiley's appearance, the event will include makeovers from beauty lines Clinique, Lancôme, and Estée Lauder, chair massages and hair embellishment extensions courtesy of Premier Salon. Attendees will also have the chance to win a day of beauty package and Go Red For Women prizes.

Go Red For Women also encourages women to participate in National Wear Red Day on Friday, Feb. 3. Women can learn about their risk for heart disease, get involved with local events and register for a free red dress pin at GoRedForWomen.org or Facebook.com/GoRed.

The campaign's Wear Red Day Challenge will spotlight the most spirited supporters. Thirteen Wear Red Day Award categories are listed on Facebook.com/GoRed. Participants can record a video or take photos of their efforts to "Go Red" and submit them on the Wear Red Day Challenge tab on the campaign's Facebook page through Feb. 23. Winners will be announced for each category on Feb. 25.

More women die of heart disease than all forms of cancer combined. Some eight million women in the U.S. are living with heart disease, but only one

in six women believes that heart disease is her greatest health threat. Ninety percent of women have one or more risk factors for developing heart disease.

"Understanding your risk factors is a smart way to keep you heart healthy and events like this encourage woman to take control of their personal health," said Dr. Monique Butler, medical director of corporate health and wellness promotions for the Detroit Medical Center and an American Heart Association volunteer.

Find out more by visiting GoRedForWomen.org or call (888) 694-3278.

GARDEN & NATURE

Send garden and nature announcements to Sharon Dargay at sdargay@hometownlife.com.

Farmington Garden Club

Master flower show judge, Sally Ouelette, will talk about designs for special occasions Monday, Feb. 6 at the Spicer House in Heritage Park, Farmington Road between 10 Mile and 11 Mile in Farmington. The meeting starts at noon, with the program following at 1 p.m.. Ouelette

is a member and past president of the Greater Detroit Arrangers Guild and a master gardener. Guests are welcome. Call Joann at (248) 474-0866 or visit www.farmington-gardenclub.com.

Native trees

Tom O'Dell, collections and natural areas specialist at the Nichols Arboretum in Ann Arbor, will talk about "Native Alternatives to Invasive Trees and Shrubs," from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, at the Costick Center, 28600 West 11 Mile, in Farm-

ington Hills. The seminar also will feature a case history of native plant restoration at Heritage Park in Farmington Hills, presented by Ashlie Simons, nature center supervisor, and Randy Lovett, supervisor of parks, Farmington Hills. Attendees will receive a packet of information and suggestions for "next steps" in their home landscape projects. The seminar is free, but advance registration is requested. Call Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority at (248)

288-5150 or e-mail to LFDean@aol.com.

Livonia Garden Club

Sandra Healy, Advanced Master Gardener from Earthenjoy Flower Scaping, will talk about garden design at the next meeting, 7 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 7, at the Livonia Senior Center, located at Five Mile and Farmington Road, Livonia. E-mail to sprakay@sbcglobal.net

Gardening seminars

The Master Gardener Association of Western Wayne County will present four seminars for the gardening public, 7-8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, 14, 21, and 28, in the Wayne County Extension Office auditorium, 5454 Venoy, a quarter mile north of Van Born, Wayne. Cost is \$10 per session or \$30 for all if registered in advance. For more information visit mgwwc.org. To register, e-mail mgwvcorg@gmail.com or call (313) 719-1181.

Master gardeners will teach each session:

- All About Herbs kicks off the series on Feb. 7. Learn how to choose plant and harvest herbs for culinary and other uses. Taught by Pat Mann herb specialist from the Greenfield Village Herb Associates.

Roller derby league offers training program

Detroit Derby Girls, Michigan's female roller derby league, will hold its third annual Derby! U program to train prospective players from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Feb. 11 and 12 at Masonic Temple in Detroit.

The two-day program costs \$50 and is open to any women interested in attending the June try-out for the league. No skating experience is required, but attendance at Derby! U is required to try-out.

Guest lectures from Robb Dunn, USA Roller Sports Speed Skating and Detroit Derby Girls Coach, will complement the hands-on lessons from Detroit Derby Girls All-Stars Travel Team skaters. Attendees must provide their own basic equipment, including skates, helmet, mouth guard, knee pads, elbow pads, and wrist guards. A limited amount of skate equipment will be available for rent on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Masonic Temple Drill Hall is home to Detroit Derby Girls' bouts, but teams practice in Livonia.

For more information or to register, e-mail the Detroit Derby Girls' human resources department at hr@detroitderbygirls.com. Visit the league's Web site at www.detroitderbygirls.com.

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Please join us for these upcoming events

<p style="text-align: center;">Parisian Party Wednesday, February 1 12:00 p.m. French themed entertainment Chicken Cordon Blue, Au Gratin Potatoes, French Style Green Beans, Chocolate Silk Pie.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Valentine's Lunch Tuesday, February 14 12:00 p.m. Featuring a Baked Potato Bar, Split Pea Soup, Entertainment and a Chocolate Fountain with all the fixings.</p>
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Study urges booster seat use when carpooling

Many parents are more relaxed about booster seat use when carpooling, according to a study conducted by the University of Michigan's C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

According to the study, most parents report that they typically require their child to use a life-saving booster seat, but more than 30 percent say they don't enforce this rule when their child is riding with another driver.

"The majority of parents reported that their children between the ages of 4 and 8 use a safety seat when riding in the family car," said Dr. Michelle Macy, a clinical lecturer of emergency medicine at the University of Michigan Medical School and a pediatrician at U-M C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. "However, it's alarming to know that close to 70 percent of parents carpool, and when they do, they're often failing to use life-saving booster seats."

Researchers say they believe practical barriers, including limited vehicle space and difficulties making arrangements with other drivers, lead parents to abandon safety seats when carpooling.

Most state laws require children to use a booster seat, many until children are 8 years old. National recommendations encourage the use of booster seats until a child



reaches 57 inches, which is the average height of an 11-year-old child.

Placing a youngster in an adult seat belt prematurely can cause shoulder and lap belts to fit improperly, negating the life-saving benefits of seatbelts.

"Therefore, parents who do not consistently use booster seats for kids who are shorter than 57 inches tall are placing children at greater risk of injury," Macy said. "Parents need to understand the importance of using a booster seat for every child who does not fit properly in an adult seat belt on every trip."

Study authors suggest that social norms may be set by state booster seat laws, because parents are motivated to follow guidelines set by law.

State booster seat laws were associated with higher safety seat use, regardless of carpooling, even though half of parents surveyed admit to not knowing the age cited in their state booster seat law and another 20 percent guessed incorrectly.

"According to current recommendations most children should be using booster seats beyond the age cited in state laws. As many parents may not even be aware of current booster seat recommendations, pediatricians should make it a priority to share this vital information with them," Macy noted.

Michigan law requires children ages 8 and under who are less than 4'9" in height to be secured in a child restraint system.

MEDICAL DATEBOOK

February

GARDEN CITY HOSPITAL

• National Go Red Day: Women's Heart Health Forum features cardiologist Dr. Karen Wiarda, and an interactive Polynesian aerobics class, along with prize drawings, giveaways and lunch, 10 a.m.-noon, Friday, Feb. 3 at the Garden City Hospital, Medical Office Building, Lower Level Classrooms, 6245 Inkster Road, Garden City. All events are free. Heart risk assessments will be offered on site. Seating is limited. Call (734) 458-3248 for reservations.

• Healthy Hearts 101 celebrates American Heart Month. Cardiologist Nizam Habhab will discuss heart health at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16 at the Village of Redford, 25300 Six Mile Road, Redford. An exercise physiologist will be on hand to teach simple exercise techniques that can easily be done at home or in the office. A heart healthy dinner will be served. All events are free. Heart risk assessments will be offered on site. Seating is limited. Call (734) 458-3248 for reservations.

• Heart Walk 2012 celebrates American Heart Month, 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Feb. 25 at Westland Mall, 35000 Warren Road, Westland. Dress in comfortable clothing and bring all your heart-related questions for a panel of experts. A hospital pharmacist will be on hand to answer medication questions; free health screening on site; and Pulse EMS will be on hand for support. All events are free. Heart risk assessments will be offered on site. Call (734) 458-3248 to reserve.

• Get Up and Move, an invigorating exercise program, aims to help you to make an easy transition back to an exercise program or get you started for the first time. It meets

at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, 14, 21 and 28 and Thursday, Feb. 2, 9, 16 and 23. Fee is \$30 per month; for more information call (734) 458-3242.

• Learn how to relax, stretch and breathe while creating balance, strength and flexibility for both the body and mind through yoga, 4 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7, 14, 21 and 28 and 6:30 p.m., Wednesday-Thursday, Feb. 1-2, 8-9, 15-16, 22-23 and 29. Wednesday-Thursday classes are held at the Westland Specialty Center, 35600 Central City Parkway, Westland. Tuesday classes meet at the hospital in Garden City.

• Eating Disorders Support Group meets 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 at the hospital. Call (734) 458-4330 for more information.

• Diabetes Self-Management series meets at 9 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 21 and 28 and Thursday, Feb. 23 and Learn self-care skills of nutrition, exercise, medication management, monitoring of blood sugar levels, foot and skin care, prevention of problems and psychosocial issues. Call (734) 458-4330 to register.

Garden City Hospital is located at 6245 Inkster Road, Garden City.

MICHIGAN BARIATRIC INSTITUTE

The Michigan Bariatric Institute offers free educational seminars, from 6-7:30 p.m., Feb. 2, March 1, and April 5 at St. Mary Mercy Hospital, located at 36475 Five Mile in Livonia. The public is invited to hear a presentation about laparoscopic bariatric surgery by Dr. Tallal Zeni, director of minimally invasive and bariatric surgery and Dr. Jacob Roberts, bariatric surgeon will talk about laparoscopic bariatric surgery on Feb. 2. For more information call (877) 949-9344.

Learn about medical careers at job fair

Representatives from more than 30 health care facilities will be on hand at the annual Allied Health and Nursing Job Fair, 1-3 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, at Schoolcraft College.

They'll offer information about available positions for registered nurses,

licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, home health aides, health information technicians, coding specialists, medical receptionists, medical assistants, medical billers, medical transcriptionists and massage therapists. Resumes will be accepted at the fair, which will be

held in the DiPonio Room of the VisTaTech Center on the college's main campus, located on Haggerty between Six Mile and Seven Mile in Livonia.

The Allied Health and Nursing Job Fair is free and open to the public. Call (734) 462-4421 for more information.

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NATIONAL GO RED DAY: WOMEN'S HEART HEALTH FORUM
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Garden City Hospital, Medical Office Building Classrooms
6245 Inkster Road • Garden City, MI 48135

National Wear Red Day. Cardiologist Dr. Karen Wiarda will be available to answer all your heart healthy questions. Afterwards, we'll get our hearts pumping in a Polynesian aerobics class - the latest exercise sensation. Bring or wear your red work out clothing and GO RED! Guests can also enjoy a fabulous prize drawing, giveaway items and lunch.

HEALTHY HEARTS 101
Thursday, February 16, 2012 • 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Village of Redford
25300 Six Mile Road • Redford, MI 48240

GCH Cardiologist Nizam Habhab, DO, FACC, FACOI will discuss heart health. An exercise physiologist will be on hand to teach simple exercise techniques that can easily be done at home or in the office. A heart healthy dinner will be served.

GCH HEART WALK 2012
Saturday, February 25, 2012 • 9 am - 12 Noon
Westland Mall
35000 Warren Road • Westland, MI 48185

Dress comfortable and bring all your heart related questions for our panel of experts. A GCH pharmacist will be on hand to answer medication questions, free health screening on site, and our Pulse EMS will be on hand for support.

All events are FREE. Heart risk assessments will be offered on site. Seating is limited. Call 734-458-3248 to reserve your space.


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- 17" Painted Aluminum Wheels

2012 EXPLORER XLT FWD
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CASH!**



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Offers Up To 28 highway MPG³

\$285 For 24 months for current A/Z plan lessees² \$2,133 Cash Due at Signing
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- Tire Pressure Monitoring System
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2012 F-150 SUPERCAB XLT 4X4
MSRP: \$38,660⁵

**EXTRA
\$750
AUTO SHOW
CASH!**



**EXTRA
\$500
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17 city / 23 highway MPG³

\$209 For 24 months for current A/Z plan lessees² \$3,856 Cash Due at Signing
PER MONTH LEASE
Security Deposit Waived. Taxes, title and license fees extra.

- Sync, Tow & Chrome package
- 5.0L V8 Engine
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- AdvanceTrac[®] with Roll Stability Control
- Trailer Sway Control

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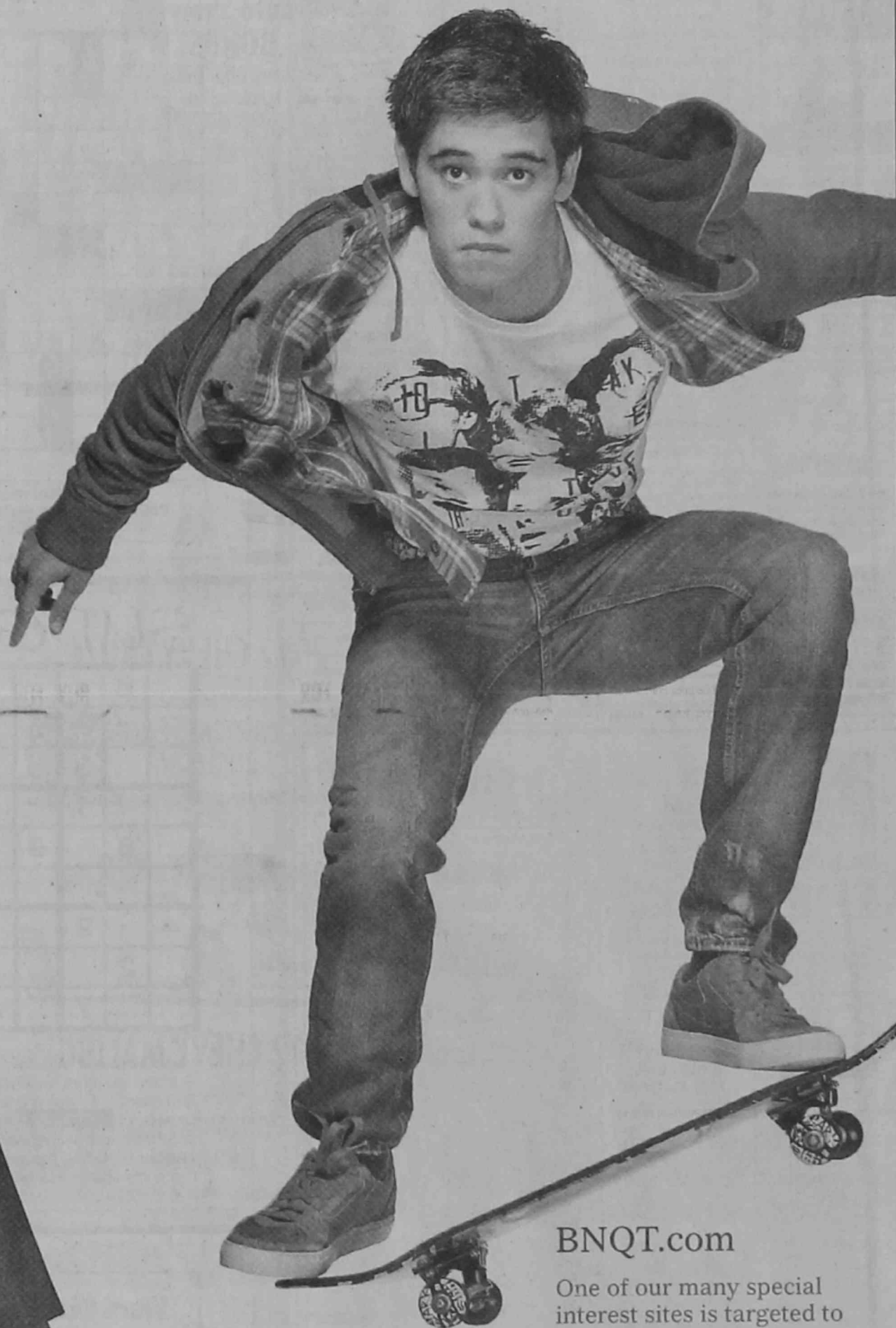
(1) 4 vehicles feature Auto Show Cash: \$500 Auto Show Cash on Focus, \$500 Auto Show Cash on Fusion and Edge, and \$750 Auto Show Cash on Escape. All applicable Auto Show Cash is included in payments shown. (2) Not all lessees will qualify for Ford Credit Red Carpet low mileage lease. Residency restrictions apply. Some payments higher, some lower. Special lease rates are for eligible A/Z Plan lessees. Payments include \$500 Renewal Bonus Cash and \$250 on Focus. You must currently lease a Ford product through Ford Credit and re-lease through Ford Credit. See dealer for qualifications and complete details. Take retail delivery from dealer stock by 1/31/12. Fusion, Edge and Escape Payments include \$500 trade-in assistance. (3) MPG estimate based on 2012 Focus SE SEDAN with SFE Package- EPA-estimated 29 city/40 hwy mpg, 2012 Fusion SEL 2.5L I-4 Engine with 6-speed automatic 23 city/33 hwy mpg, 2012 Escape 2.5L I-4 Engine 21 city/28 hwy mpg, 2012 Edge SE 3.5L V6 engine 19 city/27 hwy mpg, 2012 Explorer XLT with 2.0L and 2012 F-150 Super Cab 5.0L V8 engine 17 city/23 hwy 14 optional EcoBoost engine 20 city/28 hwy mpg. (4) Horsepower and torque achieved with premium fuel. (5) MSRP, A Plan price is for qualified, eligible A Plan customers and excludes document fee, destination/delivery charge, taxes, title and registration. Optional equipment not included. Not all vehicles qualify for A Plan price. (6) Driving while distracted can result in loss of vehicle control. Only use mobile phones and other devices, even with voice commands, when it is safe to do so. Not all buyers will qualify. See dealer for qualifications and complete details. (7) Total of 37.

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Car Report

Advertising Feature

2012 WILL BE ANOTHER BIG YEAR IN RISE OF CROSSOVERS

By Dale Buss

"Crossover" utility vehicles have steadily and inexorably taken over the key marketplace position previously occupied by SUVs. Smaller, lighter, with a more integral underlying structure - and therefore nimbler and more fuel-efficient - a stable of CUVs has joined small sedans and pickup trucks as the true indicator of a full-line auto manufacturer in the U.S. market.

Here's a look at some of the most interesting and important new CUVs and SUVs slated to debut during the 2012 calendar year as well as some new 2012 models that debuted in late 2011:

The all-new, 2013 Ford Escape will be a spring replacement for one of the most enduring SUV nameplates

in the industry. Even as the previous version of Escape was preparing to make way for quite a different new one, last year Ford sold more than 254,000 of the 2011 version, up a whopping 33 percent from the previous year - demonstrating remarkable consumer demand for a decade-old model.

The new Escape demonstrates the most significant redesign of the nameplate in its history. In its sleekest configuration yet, the new Escape sports a roof that curves down slightly, triangular tail lights and other touches very different from its boxy and conservative predecessor - overall, producing 10 percent less drag.

The SUV's new version will feature all-new powertrains: three fuel-efficient four-cylinder options, including the new 1.6- and 2.0-liter EcoBoost engines, the smallest of which is expected to deliver more than 31mpg on the highway.

Escape also boasts amenities



Ford continues the legacy of Escape with the 2013 model.

such as a parking-technology package that bundles a blind-spot warning system, rain-sensing wipers, front and rear parking sensors, a backup camera and Ford's self-parking system. Most unusually, the 2013 Escape offers a "kick-to-open" power liftgate: Owners with their hands occupied simply wave a foot beneath the rear bumper, and sensors tell the liftgate to open or close.

Another significant new SUV for 2012 is the 2013 Nissan Pathfinder. Pathfinder is one of the best-known nameplates in the Nissan lineup, but sales have fallen off significantly over the last several years.

The new Pathfinder, which goes on sale in the fall, is built on a car platform like an SUV, ditching the truck platform that supported previous versions. That makes for a lighter and more fuel-efficient vehicle, promising a 25-percent increase in fuel economy versus the current model, to around 21mpg in combined city and highway

driving.

A concept version of the new Pathfinder displayed at the North American International Auto Show featured a V6 engine with continuously variable transmission and all-wheel drive. A more fuel-efficient, front-wheel-drive version also will be available.

Few would identify the CR-V as America's best-selling SUV, but that's exactly what the smallish Honda model has been. For that reason, Honda's late-2011 launch of a completely redesigned, 2012 Honda CR-V will be an important entry in the segment as the new year unfolds.

For most of 2011, Honda had a difficult time, of course, supplying the U.S. market with the previous version of the vehicle. The company was able to restore its supply chain nearly completely in time to introduce the new CR-V and believes it is poised for a big

sales year in 2012.

Typical of Honda, the "new" CR-V really represents an evolution, albeit a significant one, of the previous model. Motor Trend characterizes the new version as a careful redesign that "is about 10 percent better" than the old one in every way. The ride is softer and smoother, for instance, and a new electric power-steering system is said to match the old hydraulic unit's road feel and directness.

Actually, the biggest change in the 2012 CR-V and last year's version may be in the styling, which includes a more raked windshield and a completely new tail.

Set to be unveiled at the New York International Auto Show in March, the 2013 Hyundai Santa Fe is expected to be launched by the end of 2012. It is expected to represent a significant overhaul of a vehicle that was last reconfigured for 2010, including a slightly larger overall size and an interior and exterior recast in Hyundai's evolving design language.

Mazda unveiled its 2013 Mazda CX-5 at the Detroit auto show. Expected to go on sale in the spring, the new CX-5 will boast segment-leading fuel economy of 35mpg on the highway, 26 in the city and 29 in combined driving. Cast in an eye-catching new design with scalloped sides and a new grille, the CX-5 will showcase Mazda's pioneering suite of new drivetrain and weight-saving techniques, called Skyactiv as a package.



The 2013 Pathfinder will be an important new vehicle for Nissan.

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