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Dear Readers,
We hope you enjoy today's "holiday version" of your Observer Newspaper. It offers a wider view of the area's news, sports and features. Look for these special editions on Dec. 31 and Jan 3. Your hometown Observer returns Sunday, Jan. 6. I welcome your comments.
Happy New Year,
Susan M. Rosiek,
Executive Editor
srosiek@hometownlife.com

Store makes special delivery of husband's final gift

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

A Livonia woman whose husband passed away just hours after ordering her Christmas gift received that final expression of his love courtesy of the store that took the order.

The owners and staff of Showroom of Elegance Fine

Jewelry, 6018 Canton Center, Canton, gave a pendant to Lisa Beyer of Livonia that her husband, Michael McCluskey, had ordered before his death.

McCluskey died unexpectedly Dec. 13, 2007. He was 43 years old.

Rick Denman, manager of the jewelry store, said the pendant was delivered to the store

and they called to tell Mr. Beyer it was ready for pickup. It was then they learned he had passed away.

"We found out he had died on the day he ordered the pendant," he said. "We called on the day of his funeral."

Lisa Beyer had been home from her husband's funeral for about two hours when she

picked up his cell phone.

"The person on the phone said, 'Oh no, you're the wife, aren't you?' and I had to explain what had happened," she said. After the call, Denman said he and the other store employees started talking about what to do. After some debate, they wrapped the piece and delivered it.

"We decided to do the right thing," Denman said. "We all felt really bad, they (the Beyers) had both been customers for years, so the store decided to pay for it."

This was a surprise to Beyer, who had planned to go to the store and purchase the pendant anyway, if only to have his final gift.

"I was speechless when I saw the man in the driveway," she said. "It was so generous and kind."

Besides Christmas, the couple would have celebrated their first anniversary Dec. 28.

"He was a wonderful man," Beyer said. "I have a developmentally disabled son and he'd taken responsibility for him."

Canton teen killed in tragic skiing accident

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
STAFF WRITER

The day after 13-year-old Clare Dougherty died, the atmosphere at Shanty Creek Resorts was somber.

"This was a very tragic, freak accident that just tears your heart out," said Jack Eslick, Shanty Creek chief operating officer and general manager. "It's been a hard day."

Clare, a Canton Township girl, was vacationing with family on Christmas Day when she decided to hit the slopes once more before leaving the Custer Township resort in the northern Lower Peninsula. She was killed when she went off a slope and struck a retaining wall.

Her inexperience, coupled with a lack of a helmet, contributed to her death, according to Antrim County Sheriff Terry Johnson.

Plymouth-Canton Schools spokesman Frank Ruggierello confirmed Wednesday that Dougherty was an eighth-grader at Pioneer Middle School. He spoke to Pioneer Principal Phil Freeman, who personally knew the girl and her family.

"Mr. Freeman knew Clare and her family very well. He's feeling very bad for the family. He said she was a wonderful student, and a great kid," he said.

Ruggierello said once the students return from winter break on Jan. 7, the district will have its support team available for students. "Mr. Freeman has already contacted counselors at the school," he said. "They will be available to help students grieve."

Eslick, who had met with Clare's father, said the family had been vacationing at the resort with a host of other family members.

"You could tell his heart was broken," he said. "The good thing was that he had the support of all of his family right there."

It's unclear whether Clare, who was discovered by a group of snowboarders, was alone on the slopes or with her brother.

"I've heard different stories but no one saw the accident," Eslick said. "She was out there having fun and trying to do some more skiing before her family left."

Eslick said this was the first fatality at the resort.



The mother/daughter power shopping team of Canton residents Christine and Olivia Wofford found plenty of deals at Westland Mall on Wednesday.

Holiday hang over?

Stores not crowded with day-after Christmas shoppers

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
STAFF WRITER



Merchant Rebecca Johnson of Stockings To Stuf, a kiosk store in Westland Mall, thought that sales were off for the day after Christmas. She lives in Westland.

Wednesday was no Black Friday. "This is totally amazing," said Rebecca Johnson of Stockings To Stuf. "I've been here since 7 a.m. and haven't had a customer yet."

As a covering of fog hovered over metro Detroit Wednesday morning, only a sprinkle of vehicles occupied the parking lot at Westland Shopping Center. The same was true for the Target, Burlington Coat Factory and TJ Maxx stores that sit opposite the mall. In Canton, Wal-Mart had a sparse crowd for its 6 a.m. opening.

Johnson, who sells Christmas stockings and hats from a kiosk in Westland mall, said shopper turnout for the day after Christmas was a stark contrast to the day after Thanksgiving.

"On Black Friday, I got here at 6:20 a.m. to open at 7 a.m. and spent 20 minutes in the parking lot trying to find a space. Today, I parked right in the front. It seems like either everyone got gift cards or exactly what they wanted," she said, while leaning in front of

Please see **SHOPPING, A4**



Michigan Speaker of the House Andy Dillon visits with constituents Frank Wiecha and Jim Nagy during a coffee hour visit at Leo's Coney Island in Dearborn Heights.

House Speaker Dillon keeping focused on Michigan's future

BY MATT JACHMAN
STAFF WRITER

Andy Dillon is bullish on Michigan.

Despite another year of bad economic news and a messy state budget process that he says overshadowed Lansing's accomplishments, Dillon, the speaker of the Michigan House of Representatives, sees a better future.

Getting there, he adds, will require overcoming a negative state image and restoring faith in state government.

"If we don't change that perception of our state, it's going to be harder for us to turn it around," Dillon said last week as he began a two-week holiday break.

Dillon, 46, a nearly lifelong Redford Township resident, was catapulted to statewide prominence 13 months ago, when House Democrats named him their leader after he was elected to a second full term.

Low-key and unassuming, he became one of three players — the other two being Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Mike Bishop, R-Rochester, the Senate majority leader — in the spotlight as efforts to patch a \$1.8 billion hole in the state's budget dragged into the fall, finally resulting in a mixture of new taxes and spending reforms.

ANDY DILLON

Background: Redford Township native, Catholic Central graduate, accounting and law degrees from the University of Notre Dame, high school and college track star, former corporate attorney and financial analyst.

Family: wife Carol; sons Matthew, Jack and Austin; daughter Teagan.

Hobbies: "I used to golf."
Current books: "Profiles in Courage," by John F. Kennedy, and "The Second Civil War: How Extreme Partisanship Has Paralyzed Washington" and "Polarized America," by Ronald Brownstein. "It parallels very well what I just went through," Dillon said.

Dillon is blunt about what Michigan was up against.

"The state was facing insolvency in February if we didn't deal with the solution in September," he said.

But the crisis atmosphere, Dillon said, allowed for reforms that wouldn't have gotten done otherwise.

"It's a very challenging job, and as bad as it was ... it's a good time to be there," he

Please see **DILLON, A6**



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Kids bored already? Here are some winter break ideas

BY REBECCA JONES
STAFF WRITER

Children don't have to Wii away the days of winter break with video game controllers in hand. They can stay active, get crafty or even head to the library without hitting the books.

Here are a few area options:
Dance, riff, more

A Dance, Dance dance-off and Guitar Hero riff-off are planned at the Canton Public Library. Girls can also make their own lipgloss at the library's spa day on Jan. 5. "Oh my gosh, (these programs) are so popular. We plan for that week," said children's librarian Anne Cnockaert. "We don't have story time so we can focus on other programs."

People who have out-of-town guests can bring them along for most programs, she said. Call ahead (734) 397-0999 or go online at www.cantonpl.org to find out more or register.

Y hosts day camp fun

The Livonia Family YMCA offers day camps for members and non-members, ages 3 to 12. Parents can sign children up for one or more days, said Brian Redding, youth sports director at the Livonia Family YMCA.

Campers from the Livonia, Farmington and Plymouth branches will meet for activities like sledding, ice skating and bowling and then return to their own facilities for more fun, such as swimming or crafts.

Camps run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with before and after care from as early as 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Member rates are \$35 per day; non-member rates are \$50.

The YMCA also plans futsal (indoor soccer) and volleyball tournaments the week of Jan. 1.

Try serving others

High school students can

earn community service credits working with the Plymouth YMCA to package food for Focus:HOPE, prep food with Food Gatherers and build rain barrels for Growing Hope.

Projects are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Jan. 2-4.

Only 13 volunteers will be accepted per day. Contact Plymouth YMCA Community Director Jenny Roszel at (734) 453-2904 or e-mail at jroszel@ymcamedetroit.org to register.

Kicking and skating

Rockers Soccer will be conducting soccer clinics in Westland at the Bailey Center on Saturday, Dec. 29, and Friday, Jan. 4. The price is \$15 per student for one day, or \$25 for both.

Mike Modano Ice Arena in Westland, Artic Edge in Canton, Redford Ice Arena and Eddie Edgar Arena in Livonia also offer open skating during the week. Call those locations for specific times.

Stitch your time

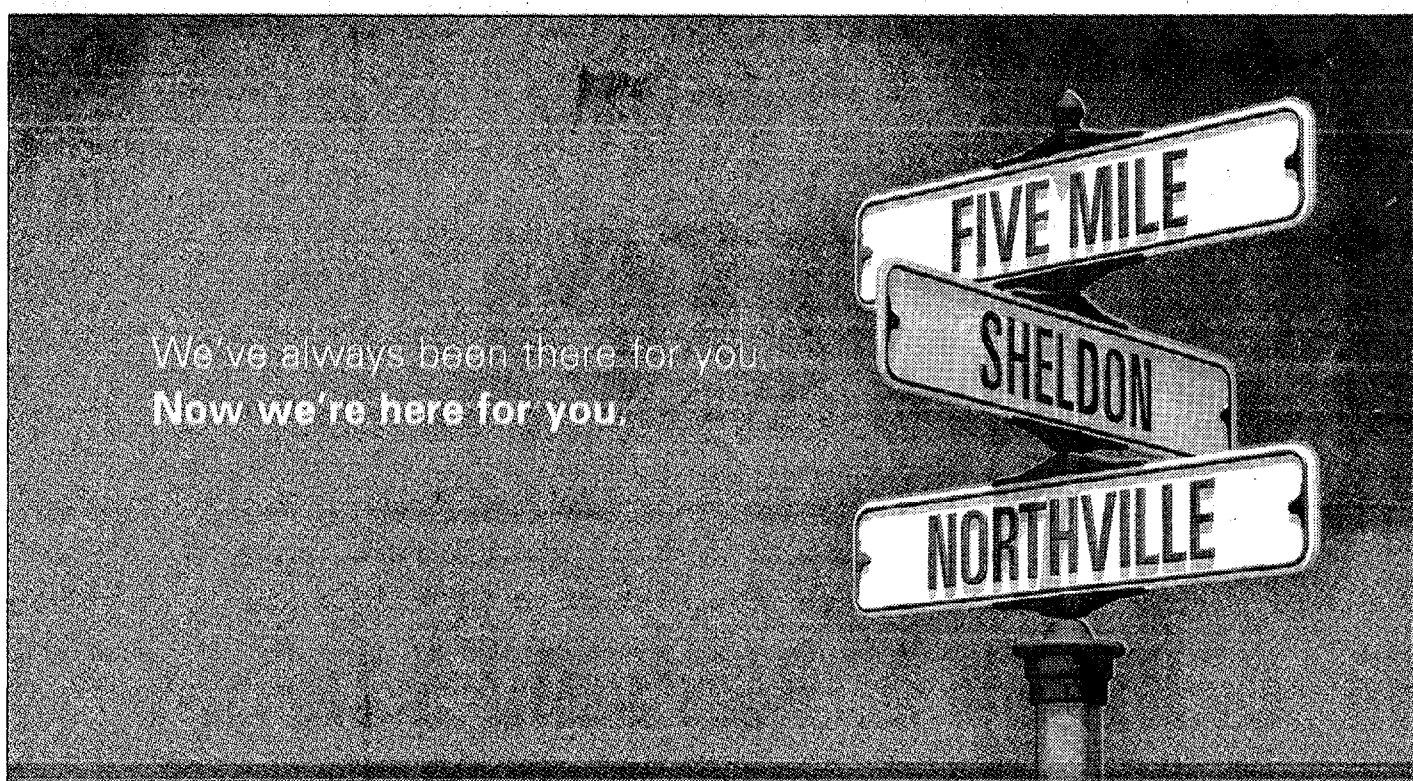
For kids who want to learn a new skill, Jo-Ann Stores offer winter breaks kids' classes, \$10 each for a two-hour session, plus the cost of materials.

Quilting, crocheting, knitting, making a flowered picture frame and beginning sewing classes are offered chainwide.

"This is the first time we've done this," said Sandee Boegehold, education coordinator at the Westland store. Classes will be canceled for lack of registration, so sign up early. Parents don't have to stay with their children during class, but they do have to stay in the store.

For specific times, call or visit a store. The Westland store's number is (734) 467-8550.

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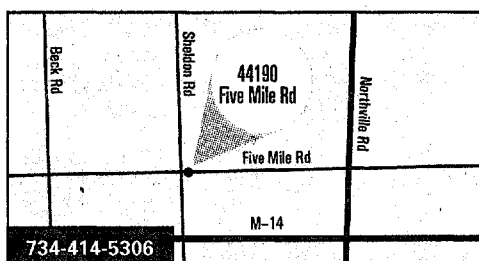
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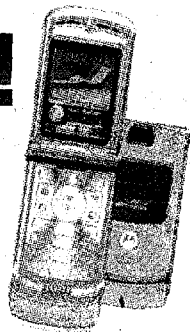
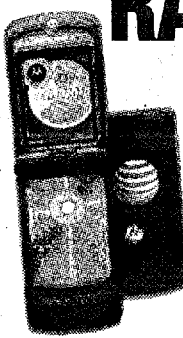
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Livonia native's roles grow, from TV ads to 'Charlie Wilson's War'

BY REBECCA JONES
STAFF WRITER



Michael Spellman's resume includes stage, TV and now, a major film, "Charlie Wilson's War."

Livonia native Michael Spellman plays CIA Agent Patrick in *Charlie Wilson's War*, which opened Friday.

"I give out information to move the story along," said Spellman, who shot scenes opposite Philip Seymour Hoffman and Tom Hanks.

Spellman's first major motion picture was directed by Mike Nichols.

"Here's this kid from Livonia, Mich., in that company. I was speechless," Spellman said in an interview at his parents' house. "I couldn't ask for a better experience and a better group of people to learn from."

Spellman, a 1997 graduate of Churchill High School, joined the Creative and Performing Arts program as a junior there and went on to study at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in L.A.

He returned home in time to see *Charlie Wilson's War* with his family.

Though disappointed that he didn't get to go to his first premiere (the invitation came after the fact), he said, "How appropriate would it be for me to see my first film (back home)."

The good thing about being at home is nobody really cares how many of his scenes got cut, he said.

To them, it's just important that he's in it.

He also played a doctor, Jim Babinski, for three episodes in the 2005 season of "ER."

Francesco," she purrs, nuzzling him).

Commercials can be quite lucrative, he's found. But the paychecks are unpredictable.

Sometimes at auditions you hear "thank you" and that's it. He's read for Clint Eastwood four times.

"I'm on his radar," Spellman said.

Persistence is the main key in the business, he said. "You have to be willing to weather the storm and be smart with your money."

Spellman also has been working as a producer's assistant for a '50s pop musical "The Marvelous Wonderettes" in L.A.

A Detroit Tigers fan, Spellman misses things about Michigan — Faygo, Bettermaid potato chips, and especially Senate Coney Island chili dogs, with chili and cheese only, and lemon rice soup.

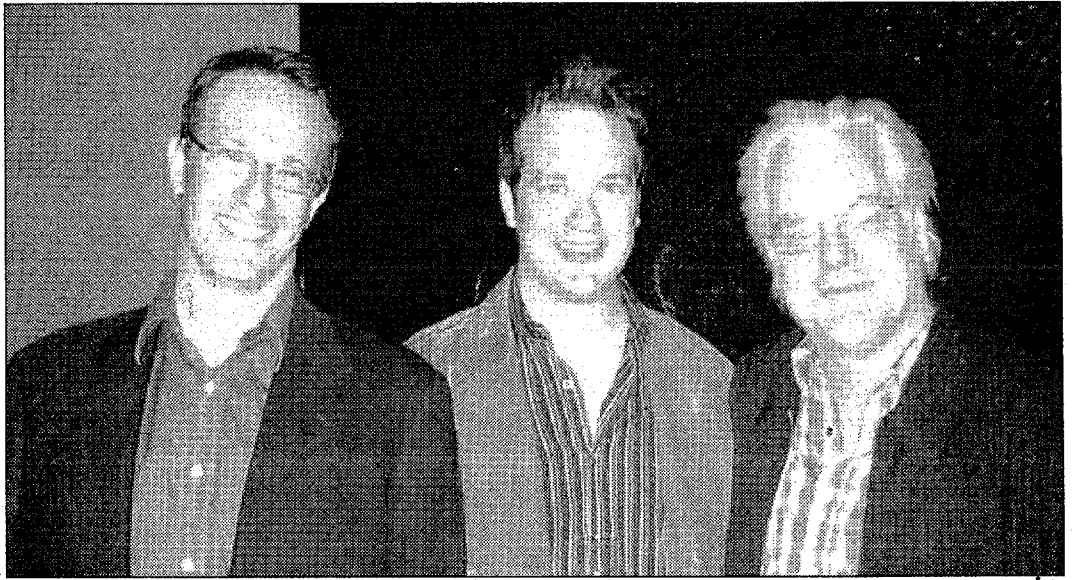
Spellman said he's friends with most of the CAPA alumni out there.

Whenever any of them from the L.A. area comes home, they're required to bring back either a Crave Case from White Castle or a frozen Buddy's Pizza, he said.

In an interview with director Nichols, before being offered the role in *Charlie Wilson's War*, Nichols asked Spellman to sum up how his career is going.

"It's coming along," he said. "It seems like I'm making progress."

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Actors Russell Edge, Livonia native Michael Spellman and Academy Award winner Philip Seymour Hoffman worked together in "Charlie Wilson's War."

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SHOPPING

FROM PAGE A1

sign that advertised all of her items as 50 percent off.

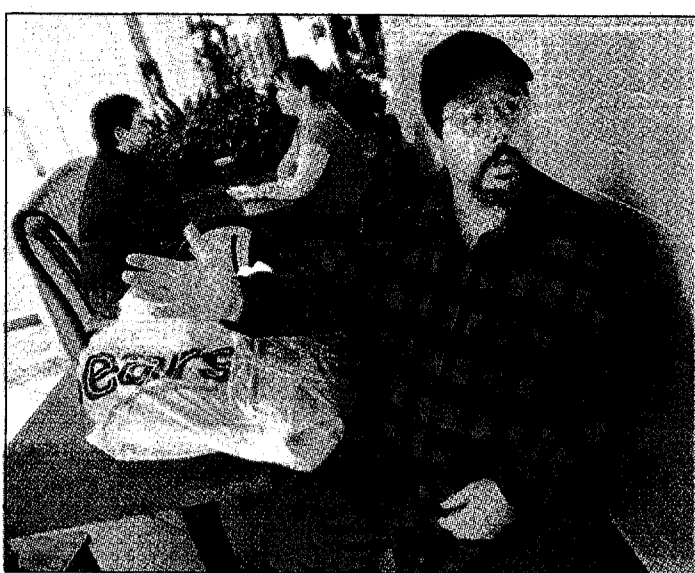
As small groups of shoppers paced the mall, Ron Brandenburg of Westland said it was obvious that apparel, video games or toys weren't flying off the shelves in spite of discounts and slashed prices.

"We went to Target at 7 a.m. and we walked in and checked right out," he said. "We spent so much money there we almost went broke, but there weren't a lot of people at all."

With the mall as his second destination of the morning, Brandenburg said he was shocked by the modest number of shoppers.

"I used to work retail in this mall and back in the early '70s you could barely move through here the day after Christmas," he said.

Irene Moran and Sherri Havlik, both of



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Ron Brandenburg of Westland thought the crowds were lighter than usual for the day after Christmas.

Livonia, made their way to Cornwell Pool & Patio early Wednesday and said they were shocked there wasn't a long line of eager shoppers waiting outside the Plymouth store.

"I'm not sure if the weather kept people away, but it was not like it usually is," Moran said. "Normally, we have to wait."

Jerry Visel of Cornwell, which sells Christmas

decorations, said he had not anticipated a large shopping crowd.

"We've been around more than 25 years and this is the first season we saw a decrease in our Christmas sales, so we didn't think we would gain (Wednesday)," he said. "We had customers in here all day, but we are doing about half of what we traditionally do."

Scott Krugman, a spokesperson for the National Retail Federation in Washington D.C., said after-Christmas sales make up a significant chunk of retail profits for the season.

"The whole week after is crucial," he said, while offering a possible reason for half-empty parking lots Wednesday morning. "A lot of people still had to go to work, so I would look for the crowds on Saturday and Sunday."

tiparks@hometownlife.com

Man faces prison in theft of trust funds

A Henderson, Nev., man will find out on Jan. 24 how much time he will spend in prison after being found guilty of his role in the embezzlement of cemetery trust funds from 28 Michigan cemeteries, including sites in Westland, Livonia and Plymouth.

Wayne County Circuit Judge Brian R. Sullivan found Carter Green, 67, guilty of aiding co-defendant Clayton Smart in embezzling some \$61 million in cemetery trust monies from the cemeteries owned by Smart's Las Vegas-based company Indian Nation.

Green was found guilty of one count of racketeering, a 20-year felony, and three counts of uttering and publishing, a 14-year felony.

"The defendants in this case were quite literally robbing from the dead," said Michigan Attorney General Mike Cox in announcing the conviction.

The charges against Green stem series of written statements he made to state auditors that either he or his companies were holding up to \$25 million in trust money on behalf of Smart or businesses associated with him, statements the attorney general's investigation determined were false.

Smart is accused of pil-

fering the cemetery trust funds to invest \$31 million in Oklahoma-based Quest Minerals and Exploration Inc. in the form of unsecured promissory notes and a loan backed by highly speculative Quest oil and gas leases. He also is accused of investing \$25 million in high-risk mutual funds.

Smart is awaiting trial in Tennessee where he is charged with theft of property, conspiracy to commit theft, and money laundering involving the Forest Hill Cemeteries and Funeral Homes. Once that case is concluded, he will be brought to Michigan to face 39 counts of racketeering, embezzlement and larceny.

"We look forward to prosecuting the remaining defendant in this case," Cox said.

The cemeteries, which include Cadillac Memorial Gardens in Westland, Mt. Hope Memorial Gardens in Livonia and United Memorial Gardens in Plymouth, have been under the control of a state conservator since last December. Their sale for \$32 million to David Shipper of Ewing, N.J., is pending. Shipper is a third-generation cemetery owner who operates 12 cemeteries in Indiana and two in New York.

Sue Mason

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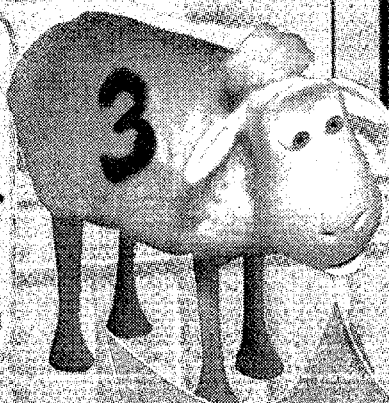
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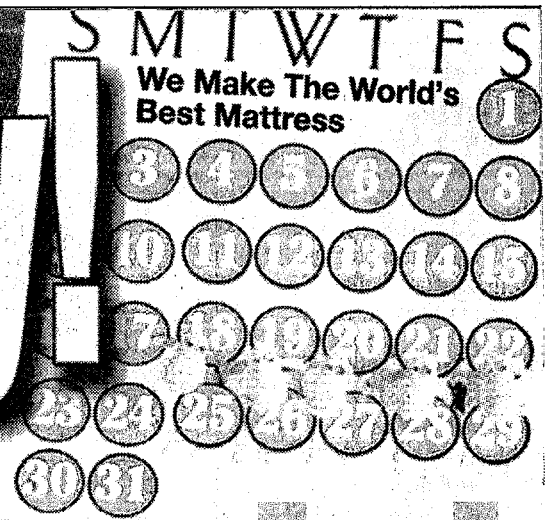
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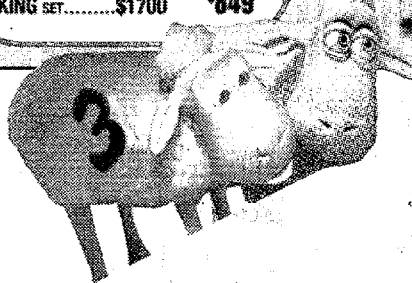
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DILLON FROM PAGE A1

and professional resume. He is from a prominent Redford family — his father, John, was a justice of the peace and later a district court judge — and graduated from Catholic Central High School, where two of his track records still stand.

He has an accounting degree from the University of Notre Dame, where he was a track and cross country runner. He captained both teams during his senior year, and was Notre Dame's athlete of the year in 1984.

Dillon's law degree is also from Notre Dame.

He's worked as a financial analyst, an assistant to former Sen. Bill Bradley, D-New Jersey, and as a litigation attorney and corporate lawyer.

But Dillon doesn't wear his success on his sleeve, said Redford Township Supervisor R. Miles Handy II, a longtime friend and political ally. It was Handy, Dillon said, who convinced him to run for the House in 2004.

"Intellectually, he excels."

He's one of the smartest guys I've ever met, but he's very humble," Handy said. "He's more comfortable in blue jeans and a sweater than a nice suit."

Politics is in Dillon's blood, his brother said.

"It's something he was always interested in from the time he was a little kid," John Dillon said. "We just grew up with politics."

They also grew up with parents who set an example of service, said a sister, Marybeth Dillon Butler.

"My parents' entire lives have always been about serving others, but they do it under the radar, not for recognition," Butler said.

The commitment required by the speaker's job has been tough on Dillon's family, his sister said. "We just feel like his life belongs to the state of Michigan," Butler said.

Dillon said his four children were patient about him spending time away from home during the budget crisis. "They understood how serious the problem was," he said.

It's been tough to find time to spend in his district, too, he said. "People want to see you around," he said.

Dillon, who faces a recall effort over his support of increased taxes, said he plans to seek a third full House term next year. As far as running for another office, he said, he'll think about that in 2008.

He expects significant legislation to come from the House next year, including energy reforms designed to spur power plant construction, measures to deal with the waste from factory farms, and protections against predatory lending. He also expects the House to address a projected \$24 billion bill for the future health-care costs of retired state and public school employees.

Dillon said he's been impressed with how the Legislature can affect people's lives for the better.

"You can actually have a significant impact up there quickly," he said.

Michigan, Dillon said, has a window of five to seven years in which the economy must diversify and the state must invest in education, infrastructure, the environment and other quality-of-life areas in order to attract new businesses and keep a skilled work force.

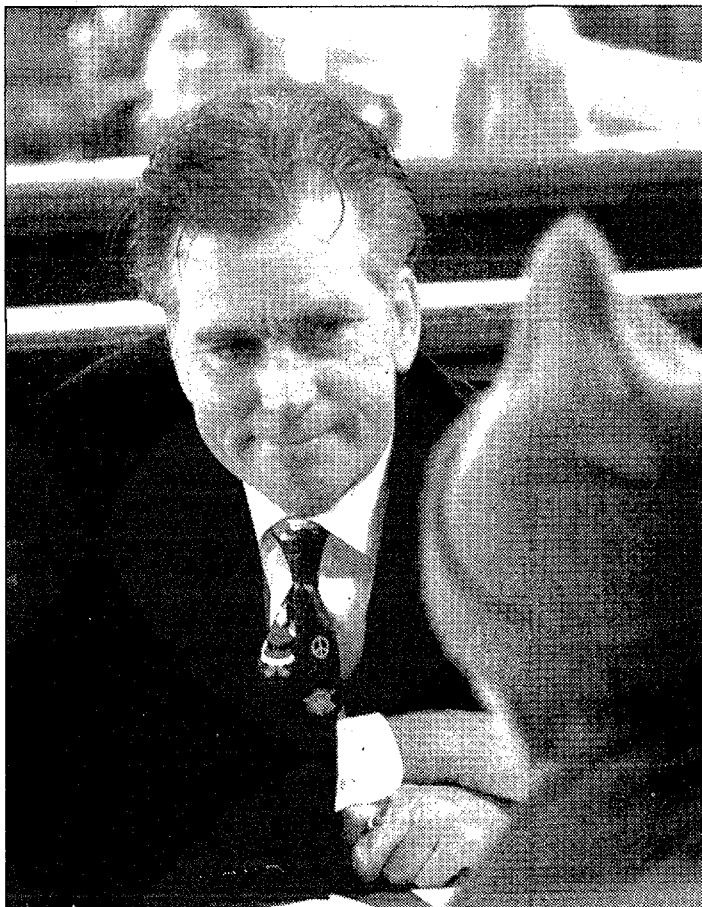
Falling short, he said, means

heading in "a very negative direction."

Dillon is staying upbeat. "The future's bright, and

that's kind of the one thing that keeps me going," he said.

mjachman@hometownlife.com



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Andy Dillon speaks with constituent James Gullett, of Dearborn Heights.

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Parents need medical legal form to help adult children

At a recent seminar, I was approached by an older couple who told me their 19-year-old granddaughter had become ill when she was away at college. The young woman



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

was taken to a hospital where she was treated. When the parents were notified, they rushed to the hospital but unfortunately discovered doctors would not discuss their daughter's situation nor consult with them about treatment.

The issue for doctors was legal — the patient was an adult and the parents did not have the proper legal documentation to be consulted with regards to their daughter's situation.

The parents retained the services of an attorney and eventually did gain the rights to be consulted and to make decisions with regards to their

daughter's treatment.

The grandparents said the emotional stress that it caused the parents was the worst part of the ordeal.

The good part of this story is that the daughter recovered and returned to school. However, the important lesson here is to make sure you have the proper estate planning documents for yourself and your loved ones.

It's not unusual for most parents not to have any sort of legal documentation when it comes to their children. However, when children reach the age of majority, 18, he/she is a legal adult and parental rights as well as obligations extinguish. If your child is an adult and if you will have to make medical and other decisions for your adult child, appropriate documentation is important. After all, no one wants to incur legal fees and go to court over family issues.

In this case, a Medical Durable Power of Attorney with the proper HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) provi-

sions, the parents would have had the legal right to discuss their daughter's situation with the doctors and make decisions.

This an extremely important document that every adult needs to obtain. In simple terms, the document allows someone to sit in your shoes and make medical decisions for you if you are unable to make them yourself. Don't assume that your spouse or your parents would have some rights to make decisions. That is not the case. Husbands and wives who do not have these documents could be forced to go through the same process as the parents in this case.

Many people avoid doing any form of estate planning because they don't want to think of the inevitable or they assume it's too expensive.

Most people are surprised to learn not everyone needs to use an attorney for estate planning purposes. The state of Michigan offers a free fill-in-the-blank Will and a Medical Durable Power of Attorney (Michigan Patient Advocate

Form). These documents are available in many locations, including public libraries, the State of Michigan's Web site (www.michigan.gov/sos) and my Web site (www.bloomassetmanagement.com).

Parents of adult children need, if nothing more, to have a Medical Durable Power of Attorney.

If your college-age son or daughter is home for the holidays, download a copy of the Michigan Patient Advocate Form, complete it and have them sign it in front of the appropriate witnesses. Hopefully, you can put the document in a drawer and never worry about it again. You will have a sense of comfort in knowing that not only did you do the right thing, but that you did the responsible thing.

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

CRIME WATCH

Caught with drugs

GARDEN CITY - A student at Garden City High School, 6500 Middlebelt was arrested Dec. 20 for drug possession after he was stopped by school staff for taking food he hadn't purchased in the cafeteria. When an administrator called him over, she noticed the student had placed something in a plastic tub used to collect dirty silverware. A baggy containing 31 white pills was recovered and police were called. The student, 17, told police his grandmother used the pills for headaches. The officer had a pharmacist look at the pills which were identified as Xanax.

Driver flees police

GARDEN CITY - A Garden City police officer spotted a suspect wanted for stealing a vehicle in Dearborn Heights Dec. 24 and ended up pursuing the suspect until the stolen car crashed in Inkster.

The officer heard a radio call about a Volvo station wagon that had just been stolen. He tried to stop the vehicle, which he said was speeding on Cherry Hill, but the car took off at a high rate

of speed running stop signs on Garden City side streets and then crossed into Inkster, the officer said. Eventually, the suspect drove onto an unpaved icy path along the Rouge River. When the vehicle suddenly braked, the officer said he had to stop quickly and the patrol car slide into the rear of the stolen vehicle which then side-swiped the patrol car.

The suspect then drove the vehicle down a 40-foot embankment towards the river and crashed into trees at the bottom, the officer said. The suspect, an Inkster man, ran from the car and was caught as he tried to hid under a fallen tree, said the officer. The vehicle owner said his cell phone and some Christmas presents had also been in the car.

Home break-in

REDFORD TOWNSHIP - A laptop computer, cash and credit cards were among the things reported stolen from a house on Lennane Street north of Six Mile after a break-in early Sunday.

The burglar or burglars had used an unlocked window to get into the house, a police report said. The victim later learned that stolen credit and automatic teller machine cards had been used.

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OUR VIEWS

Annual Auto Show vital to economy

Economic predictions for the coming year are not optimistic for the metro Detroit area. A slowdown in the national economy is only adding to Michigan's troubled situation.

For anything good to happen for Detroit, the auto industry has to do well. Though it has been clear for a long time that southeast Michigan has been too dependent on the auto industry, the Big Three and their support businesses remain the heart of our economy.

Even as government leaders try to find ways to attract other, more cutting edge businesses, the auto industry will continue to be at the center of our economy for many years to come.

That's why Detroit's annual auto showcase, the North American International Auto Show, is so crucial to our future, as well as a highly entertaining way to spend an afternoon or evening.

This year's Auto Show opens to the public at Cobo Hall on Jan. 19 and runs through Jan. 27. It is here that Detroit's automakers and part suppliers will go head to head with auto companies from around the world. In the week before the public opening, they will introduce new models, fanciful concept cars and almost ready for prime time vehicles. They will offer their solutions to dwindling, expensive and polluting gasoline. They will offer the latest in safety, as well as the latest in speed. And they will wait for the world's reaction and hope to launch the next Mustang, the next minivan, the next SUV revolution — anything to get the edge in a highly competitive and uncertain industry.

For visitors, it's a glittery show of bright lights, interactive displays and attractive models (human and automotive). For the city of Detroit, it's another opportunity to bring people downtown and prove that city life still has a future here and for the Detroit auto industry it's a do-or-die event where they put their best up against the world.

We wish the city and Detroit's automakers a very successful Auto Show.

Cobo expansion critical to keeping auto show

The city of Detroit and southeast Michigan will play host next month to the automotive world's movers and shakers at the annual North American International Auto Show.

The auto show helps solidify Detroit as the motor city and car capital of the world, and brings prestige — and plenty of money — to the region. But all of this is at risk if our political leaders cannot come together to either replace or seriously upgrade Cobo Hall, which hosts the auto show.

Most connected to the auto show agree Cobo is too small and too old to continue serving as the site for much longer. The auto companies want, and soon will demand, a better environment to showcase their vehicles, or will take the prestige of debuting new models and concept cars to other shows in Los Angeles, Frankfurt and elsewhere.

The problem, of course, is how to pay for a bigger and better Cobo, and who will have the responsibility of owning and operating a new expo center. And this is where the same old, tired political turf battles between city and suburbs, and Oakland and Wayne counties, threaten the loss of one of the few remaining success stories.

Predictably, Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson demands the suburbs have a stake in the new facility, if the county is expected to continue funneling dollars in the form of hotel and liquor taxes into its operations, something that has taken place for years. Moreover, Patterson wants the state of Michigan and Detroit's new casinos to pony up a share of the costs as well.

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano has floated a couple of plans for a new Cobo, and said he agrees "other players" should be involved in the project. Ficano also has scaled down his expectations for a new Cobo, which hopefully will address some of Patterson's concerns.

For his part, Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick said he would at least consider having some type of regional authority play a role in operating the new Cobo, which now is owned and operated by the city. So there does appear to be some hope for compromise.

The auto show pumps tens of millions of dollars into the area economy every year. It is not unreasonable for the auto companies to want some return on their investment, and they certainly will be asking some tough questions next month about future plans for the auto show, and Cobo.

Hopefully, while Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the region's political leaders sip champagne at the charity preview that kicks off the auto show, they will be coming up with a positive response to those questions.



LETTERS

Support helped victim's family

On behalf of Maggie and our entire family, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Livonia community for its show of concern and support during this most difficult time.

We are blessed to have so many wonderful friends in Livonia who have gone out of their way to tell us how much they love Maggie and offer other words of comfort. We would also like to thank the von Maurs for all of their help and support during this difficult time. We are forever grateful to all of you. We will never forget your kindness and compassion. Thank you.

The Webb Family

Editor's note: Maggie Webb, a victim of the shooting at Von Maur's Omaha store, formerly worked at the Von Maur at Laurel Park Place.

Dogs deserve better

There is a real concern regarding the problem of the chained or tethered outside dog which is often forgotten and virtually ignored by the family. The U.S. Department of Agriculture agrees that continuous confinement of dogs 24/7 by a tether is inhumane.

Dogs are pack animals and when chained too long become extremely bored, lonely. Over time, frustration can lead to territorial aggression. Tethered dogs are more often neglected, left without adequate food, water or shelter. They lack adequate housing, enough room to exercise and the most basic veterinary care, including vaccinations required by law.

These dogs are more likely not to have a city license. Every winter such dogs are found frozen to death. At other times, they may be left to starve, suffer from embedded collars, bleeding from insect bites or are accidentally hung due their circumstances. Unfortunately, I have witnessed this type of abuse on several occasions in many cities.

Thethering dogs is cruel and dangerous for people, and over time creates anxious, frustrated and aggressive dogs. From October 2003 to September 1007, there were at least 175 children killed or seriously injured by chained dogs across the country. A recent attack in Texas in March 2007 left two-year-old Carolina Sotello dead from neck and head wounds. States and cities all over the country are passing laws against 24/7 chaining because the laws protect both dogs and people. There are at least 100 communities and counties in at least 35 states with limits on chaining. Austria is the latest nation to complete prohibit chaining.

It is now time for Michigan to also set an example for the rest of the nation to assure the safety of our children and to raise the standards of animal care. As a licensed veterinary technician and a representative of the non-profit international organization, Dogs Deserve Better Inc., I am urging all dog owners to take their dogs into the home and make them part of the family.

Dogs Deserve Better is opposed to the permanent chained, tethered or penned "outside dog." We offer education, fencing and training assistance, provide proper shelter and accept surrendered and relinquished dogs to find them a

home where they are a true part of the family.

I urge you to remedy this oversight which condemns dogs to lives of loneliness and deprivation. To learn more on how you can help chained dogs, go to www.dogsdeservebetter.org.

Barbara Mays
Wayne County representative,
Dogs Deserve Better

Time for Middle East humanity

The recent peace conference of Middle East nations in Annapolis, Md., championed the concepts of peace, negotiation and compromise, facilitated by American-led diplomacy. It rejected terrorism, incitement and extremism. The parties present there are now embracing a renewed opportunity, with U.S. help and with, for the first time, a moderate consensus among most Arab nations. The goals: Israeli security and a Palestinian state.

Several weeks ago, the *Observer* printed an opinion piece which was filled with falsehoods and bogus charges against Israel — everything from apartheid to ethnic cleansing to a brutal military. The writer claimed firsthand knowledge of the story of the Palestinian refugees, admittedly a sad story, but one which elicits these questions: Why are they the only refugee group, after 60 years, to not have been absorbed by their brothers (the other Arab nations), nor be taken out of their squalid camps, or to be given statehood when Jordan and Egypt controlled the West Bank and Gaza for 19 years (1948-1967)?

Now is the time for criticism, false charges, distorted history and adversarial relations to give way to forward-thinking, conflict resolution and humanity.

Wendy Sadler
Canton

Time to safeguard our state

Michigan cannot afford to continue smoking in workplaces. We must provide a safe, healthy environment for our workers and their customers in order to be competitive. All persons living in and visiting Michigan deserve to enjoy air that is not polluted both inside and outside.

Senate Majority Leader Bishop opposes legislation recently passed by the house to ban smoking in most workplaces. Senator Bishop assigned HB 4163 to an obscure committee with the intent of letting it die without a vote of the Senate. He says the government has no business legislating this. This would be the same as eliminating the health department's duties to inspect restaurants and enforce basic sanitation.

The Senate (and the rest of the government) are charged with safekeeping the citizens of this state. Any who shirk this responsibility have left Michigan citizens at risk for both health and economic disadvantage.

Shame on them. Shame on the voters who let them evade their responsibilities.

Patrick Collings
Westland

Doctor's role 'a blessing'

On a recent flight to Florida to see my parents, I settled in for what I thought was going to be a quick easy flight. Unfortunately, this was not the case, I unexpectedly took ill.

I awoke to the sounds of someone asking for a medical assistance and, after a moment of wondering who needed a doctor, realized it was me. Fortunately, Dr. Rosenbaum, who has his offices in Livonia, was on hand to help. He sat with me and made sure my condition didn't worsen. He saw me through the worst of it, staying with me until I was wheeled to my parent's car.

Needless to say, I was quite upset and frightened by the whole experience. Dr. Rosenbaum's calm, competent manner helped keep me from becoming a nervous wreck, and made a frightening situation a little easier to bear. I'd like to thank Dr. Rosenbaum for all his help. His kindness was a blessing to me.

Lisa Walker
Westland

Change the way we learn

I was skimming through the paper when I saw the article, "Michigan: What we once had is now gone." This article caught my eye because I was recently trying to find a job, but it is really hard because of the changed economy.

In the article, it talks about how many jobs have been cut, and how major job suppliers are not doing well anymore. From reading this article I also started to realize how much technology has influenced education.

Being a high school student I have learned how to work all the new gadgets, but that is not always a good thing. Knowing how to use all of the technology may not help me get a good education, which will make it even harder to find a job. Many schools in other countries are changing the way they learn, which will cause us to fall behind. "They are not waiting for us to catch up. They're gone!" wrote Tom Watkins. I agree with Tom that we need to change the way our society learns and lives into a newer and more efficient place.

Julia Sawecki
Livonia

SHARE YOUR OPINIONS

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

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QUOTABLE

"The state was facing insolvency in February if we didn't deal with the solution in September."
- Speaker of the House Andy Dillon, discussing raising state taxes to help meet the state budget

CRC report helps to sort out state's employment picture

"We pay them too much," say the Republicans.

"There aren't enough of them to do the job properly," say the Democrats.

The Citizens Research Council of Michigan says they both may be right.

"Them" are Michigan's state and local government workers.

The facts-first CRC released a report Dec. 12 placing the seemingly endless debate into its proper context, comparing Michigan with all other states and with states with similar population, geography and urbanization. It's a study that offers support for both positions, though it doesn't address the basic "less is more" vs. "less is just less" philosophies of the two major political parties.

The basic conclusion of the CRC's *State and Local Government Employment: A Comparative Analysis* is "The State of Michigan has relatively fewer state and local employees than other states, but tends to compensate the state employees better than most other states."

Specifically Michigan ranked 45th of 50 states in the number of state and local employees per 10,000 residents and 39th of 50 when only state employees are considered. In addition, because of its extensive system of community colleges and public universities, Michigan has more public employees relative to population in higher education, but in other areas, including police and fire protection and corrections, Michigan is below the national average.

On the money side, average state employee base salary ranged from \$28,100 in (the state we're trying to emulate) Mississippi to \$69,100 in fashionable California. Michigan ranked sixth at \$49,700.

The report says average fringe benefits for Michigan state employees (mostly pension and health care benefits) were \$25,700, which ranked third behind Alaska and Nebraska. That issue was a major snare in the recent budget talks, forcing the Democrats to seek some wiggle room from the Michigan Education Association, one of the party's major contributors.

In absolute numbers, Michigan ranked 11th in full-time equivalent state and local employees with 486,697, with local employees accounting for 72.3 percent.

The report, on CRC's Web site at www.crcmich.org, breaks the Michigan numbers down by departments and offers comparisons with national figures. As always, CRC is careful to explain that comparing figures isn't always an easy task as circumstances and definitions differ across the country. The majority of states that come in ahead

Specifically Michigan ranked 45th of 50 states in the number of state and local employees per 10,000 residents and 39th of 50 when only state employees are considered. In addition, because of its extensive system of community colleges and public universities, Michigan has more public employees relative to population in higher education, but in other areas, including police and fire protection and corrections, Michigan is below the national average.

of Michigan in number of state and local employees per 10,000 residents includes sparsely populated Wyoming and Alaska at the top, but populous New York comes in at number 11. And while Nevada comes in last on this list, Pennsylvania is number 49. When considering state employees only, Hawaii and Alaska top the list, primarily because elementary and secondary school employees are state employees. At the bottom of that list is Illinois.

As we are pushing to have more of our children pursue a higher education, preferably in state, Michigan ranks fourth in absolute number of state higher education employees (out ranked by the larger states of California, Texas and Ohio), but only ranks 25th in employees relative to population. North Dakota and Utah top that list.

The report also shows that Michigan state employees stay on their jobs longer than in all but five other states with an average of 13.9 years.

All of these numbers are interesting and show how any set of statistics can be molded to make or break any argument.

A state senator said it best when discussing the debate over energy and renewable and alternative energy sources.

He said without a solid definition of what these terms mean, politicians are always talking past each other.

That often seems to be the case about almost every subject. Ultimately the issue is always the same. What do we as residents of this great state need and want from our state government, how much are we willing to pay for it and what methods can we agree on to raise the revenue we need.

On those issues politicians will toss statistics at each other forever.

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



Hugh Gallagher

Michigan only at beginning of dealing with difficulties

When the allies finally stopped the Germans in North Africa in November 1942, it was welcome news after three years of almost unbroken defeats. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill put it in perspective, saying, "Now, this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

Turning to Michigan and our own economic wars, I'd like to take the liberty to modify Churchill to observe that 2008 might turn out to be the "beginning of the beginning" of Michigan's slow march back from disaster. The issues are both economic and political. What's been going on hasn't been, as some claim, a "recession in one state." Instead, it is the consequence of the wrenching transformation of our dominant industry, automobiles.

The not-so-big three have been in transition, moving from an inefficient and costly system in which management and labor protected each other from their own failings to a smaller but far more efficient and globally competitive industry.

According to Sean McAlinden, the numbers genius at the Ann-Arbor based Center for Automotive Research, Michigan auto employment in Michigan dropped by around 316,000 in 1999 to 207,000 in 2007, a staggering decline of 43 percent.

He forecasts more small declines in auto jobs for the next few years. But this time, it won't be due to Michigan's economic woes. Instead, these job losses will come for the right reasons — a result of rapidly increasing productivity and cost reductions made possible by the new contracts with the United Auto Workers union.

Joan Cray, the economics whiz who heads the economic forecasting at the University of Michigan, estimates that the state lost 76,000 jobs during 2007, with another drop of 51,000 projected next year. But, she adds, "The rate of job loss becomes progressively smaller as we make our way through 2008, and by the spring of 2009, job growth pokes above zero."

She predicts a net job gain of 14,000 jobs in 2009, mostly in service industries such as health care and education.

These projections, of course, assume no national recession brought on by the subprime mortgage crunch, which has put southeast Michigan near the top of the nation for home foreclosures in recent months. "If we get a recession, we're very vulnerable because we don't have any resources to take up the shock," says Tom Clay, the respected and now-retired research director for the Citizens Research Council of Michigan.

Even without a recession, Clay says the state budget for the fiscal year that will end Sept.

30, 2008, will face (once again, thanks to the Legislature) a \$500 million deficit, split roughly equally between the general fund and the school aid fund.

Clay expects deteriorating home values to end consumers' recent habit of converting gains in home equity to TV sets and new gizmos. As a result, he thinks "sales tax income to the state might suffer, say, a \$200 million drop."

His two biggest worries at the state level: cash flow and political deadlock. "We had some trouble paying our bills on time last year," said Clay, who helped oversee state budgets for three decades, "and there's nothing about the new Michigan Business Tax and the new surcharge to that tax that make me believe there will be any material increase in cash flow."

Michigan cannot under its constitution borrow any more than it has, so a cash shortage means delayed bill payments, which in turn means the state will put off paying school districts and universities and local governments what they are expecting.

What this means to me is that the chronic structural budget deficits that we've seen for the last several years are certainly not going to go away because of what the Legislature did with taxes this fall. Gov. Jennifer Granholm, perhaps reflecting both fatigue and realism, said the other day that she wasn't about to go for any more tax increases. And you don't find many lawmakers in disagreement.

So that leaves structural changes in the organization and workings of state and local government, together with legacy costs of state employee pensions and health care. There are very large cost savings involved here, but they are very unpopular, especially with state employee unions. The governor and Legislature had a great chance to bundle them into a tax plan while they were working in crisis mode to save the state from going into default.

But they blew that opportunity. On the political front, however, what gives me some sense of hope is that legislators I talk with are beginning to get fed up with looking like a bunch of ineffective nincompoops. Most of them are good people who wanted to go to Lansing to do the right thing. But they found themselves being chivvied by their respective party leaders to do a bunch of things that looked a lot more like scoring political points than governing a state.

"It doesn't have to be like this!" one legislator said in exasperation. And if this feeling ever begins to spread through the ranks during the coming year, we just might have some real political change, and change for the better, in Lansing.

Phil Power is founder and president of The Center for Michigan, a centrist think-and-do tank based in Ann Arbor. The opinions expressed here are Power's and do not represent official views of The Center. Power welcomes reader comment at ppower@thecenterformichigan.net.



Phil Power

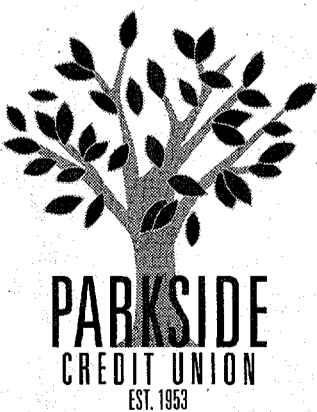
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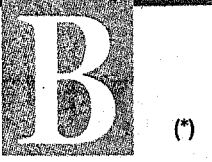
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SPORTS



Thursday, December 27, 2007

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FIRST-TEAM OFFENSE

MITCHELL WHITE, SR. QB, LIV. STEVENSON: The 6-foot-1, 170-pound senior, who guided the Spartans to the Division 1 state championship game, completed 77-of-147 passes for 1,433 yards and 18 touchdowns with only three interceptions.

White, an All-Western Lakes Activities Association pick, also could elude tacklers as he gained 290 yards on 64 attempts and three TDs.

"Mitchell managed to keep his playmaking spontaneity while really improving his command and control of the game," Stevenson coach Tim Gabel said. "His low number of interceptions and his timely scrambles for first downs bears this out."

JESSE CARPENTER, SR. QB, LIV. FRANKLIN: The 5-11, 175-pound senior became the school's all-time season passing

leader (2,220 yards) while completing a school-record 133-of-250 (53 percent).

The All-Western Division selection threw a Patriot record 18 TD passes and averaged 16.6 yards per throw.

Carpenter also played free safety when called upon and was the team's punter and placekicker.

"Statistically Jess is the best quarterback in Franklin history," coach Chris Kelbert said. "His knowledge of the game made it easy to make an adjustment, and I was comfortable knowing he could handle any situation."

AUSTIN WHITE, SOPH. RB, LIV. STEVENSON: The 5-11, 180-pound sophomore was the area's leading rusher as he finished with 1,617 yards on 200 carries (8.0 average).

The All-WLAA pick also caught 19

passes for 194 yards and scored a total of 27 touchdowns. He tallied all three Stevenson TDs in the state championship game, including a kickoff return for 90 yards.

White also played defensive back when called upon.

"Austin is already a complete back," Gabel said. "He has speed and power, but also great vision. His running discipline improved throughout the season. In addition, he's an outstanding blocker."

YOURYE WILSON, SR. RB, REDFORD UNION: The durable, hard-to-tackle Wilson again was an offensive powerhouse for Redford Union, gaining 1,095 yards in 141 carries and tallying 12 rushing TDs. In addition, the 6-0, 190-pounder caught 12 passes for 268 yards and two TDs and made 37 unassisted tackles on the defensive side.

A four-year varsity player, Wilson earned team MVP honors and was named to the All-Mega White team for the second time.

"Yourye finished off an excellent career with his senior season," said Panthers head coach Miles Tomasaitis. "As I said all season long, if we got the ball in Yourye's hands something good would happen."

Wilson's on-field leadership also lifted RU to three straight wins at the end of the schedule to ensure another winning season, Tomasaitis added.

C.J. WOODFORD, SR. RB, WESTLAND GLENN: The 5-10, 173-pound senior finished with 1,007 yards rushing on 138 carries (7.3 average) and caught 11 passes out of the backfield for 322 yards (29.3 average).

Woodford rushed for 11 TDs (with a long of 71 yards) and caught four TD

passes (with a long of 86).

He also averaged 29.7 yards per kick return, including three for TDs and tied the school-record with a long of 90. Woodford also averaged 20 yards per punt return.

"C.J. turned out to be a hard worker with a great attitude," Glenn coach Todd DeLuca said. "His senior year he made things happen."

MYRON PURYEAR, SR. RB, PLYMOUTH: The 6-foot, 175-pound senior was a pivotal player in the Wildcats' run to the playoffs as he chalked over 900 yards rushing despite seeing limited duty the first two games. Puryear had several game-changing efforts, including a 63-yard, fourth-quarter sprint to pay dirt in the Wildcats' one-point win over Canton. His performance earned

Please see **FOOTBALL, B3**

Sidelines

Ball hockey

Mens ball hockey leagues are forming at the TotalSports Complex in Wixom for the winter season.

Teams will play on Saturday nights in the roller rink at TotalSports. Ball hockey is similar to ice hockey, except it's played on a plastic floor by players wearing sneakers. Instead of a puck, players use an orange plastic ball.

"It's a great sport for the hockey lovers who aren't all that great on their skates," said Tran Longmoore, who has been playing ball hockey, or Dek Hockey, in southeast Michigan since 1999.

The cost to register is \$850 per team or \$80 per player. Teams play 10 games a year plus playoffs. Each game consists of three 14-minute periods.

In recent years, enrollment in the Michigan ball hockey league has dwindled. The league formed at MichiganDekHockey in Canton. When MiDek closed down, the team moved over to High Velocity Sports in Canton. High Velocity removed its hockey rink in 2006. Since then, the hockey league has played at the Livonia Rec Center and at TotalSports in Wixom, where the league has played since January.

The league is open for men aged 16 and older. Anyone under the age of 18 is required to wear a helmet. For more information, e-mail michiganballhockey@comcast.net.

Roach signs

Former Canton resident Nicole Roach recently signed a National Letter of Intent to participate in women's gymnastics at West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV. Roach will receive a full athletic scholarship at the school beginning next fall.

A senior at South Lyon High School, Roach lived in Canton for 12 years, attending Hoben Elementary School and Discovey Middle School. She moved to South Lyon prior to her ninth-grade year due her father's job transfer.

Nicole is the daughter of Greg and Wendy Roach.

FAN FAVORITE



WALT DMOCH

Plymouth left wing A.J. Jenks, pictured above during a game earlier this season, has become a fan favorite during his one-plus years with the Whalers. The 6-foot-2, 210-pound Jenks grew up in Wolverine Lake.

Whalers' Jenks brings team's backers to their feet

BY ED WRIGHT
STAFF WRITER

There are countless reasons why the Compuware Arena's Applause-O-Meter nearly short circuits from overwork when A.J. Jenks is introduced before each Plymouth Whalers home game, but three stand out.

Reason No. 1: the 6-foot-2, 210-pound fan favorite plays every second of every shift like its his last — and everyone knows fans appreciate high-intensity effort.

Secondly, Jenks' effort is matched by a high level of talent that has NHL draft scholars predicting he'll be selected somewhere in the first two rounds this coming summer.

Thirdly: Jenks grew up less than a 30-minute drive from the Whalers' home ice, so many games double as mini-family reunions.

"It's nice playing so close to home because I get a lot of support from my family and

THE BOOK ON JENKS

Age: 17;
Hometown: Wolverine Lake;
Size: 6-foot-2, 210 pounds;
Position: left wing;
What does A.J. stand for?: Arthur Jenks;
Favorite NHL player growing up: Brendan Shanahan;
Draft status: Selected by Whalers in the 7th round of the 2006 OHL Draft (132nd overall); he is projected to go in the first two rounds of the 2008 NHL Entry Draft;
Academics: A senior, Jenks has compiled a 3.5 grade-point average at Plymouth High School; he was named the Whalers' 2006-07 'Academic Player of the Year'.

friends," said the 17-year-old Jenks. "One of the reasons I get so many loud cheers is that I know a lot of people in the stands every game."

ALL-AROUND CONTRIBUTOR

Even those Whaler backers who have never met Jenks in person stand and salute his coast-to-coast hustle and grit. Jenks has been one of the

primary reasons the Whalers have sustained excellence one season after capturing their first Ontario Hockey League championship since 1995.

The high-energy left winger has chalked up 18 goals, nine assists and 41 penalty minutes in 29 games during a season in which more than one OHL expert expected a Whaler decline following the departure

of several key players.

Heading into Thursday's 2 p.m. home game against Saginaw, the Whalers own a 19-9-2-2 record, which is good for third place in the highly competitive OHL West Conference's West Division.

"It's hard to pinpoint one thing," said Jenks, when asked to reveal the team's secret to success so far this year. "We have good coaching and our team's chemistry is outstanding."

Jenks was caught off guard earlier this month when Greg Stefan replaced former head coach Mike Vellucci, who stepped down to focus more on his general manager responsibilities.

"I was surprised; I didn't see it coming," he said. "I like Mike Vellucci a lot, but I don't think we're going to go downhill now that Greg Stefan's the coach."

HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Like many of his teammates, Please see **JENKS, B2**

Ignition weathers Storm, 25-7

The Detroit Ignition tied the Chicago Storm for first place in the Major Indoor Soccer League with a 25-7 victory Saturday night at Sears Centre Arena.

Both teams now stand at 7-3 heading into this weekend's contests.

The Storm scored the first points of the night as defender Branko Savic booted a two-point score past Ignition keeper Danny Waltman at 4:46 of the first quarter. Worth Sampson and Ryan Mack responded with goals of their own to notch four points for the Ignition. Storm midfielder John Ball scored an unassisted three-point goal at 8:45 to give Chicago a one-point advantage at the end of the first period.

The Ignition scored eight unanswered points in the second quarter with two-point goals from Ricardinho, Hewerton Moreira and Jamar Beasley. Midfielder Kyt Selaidopoulos scored his 100th MISL career point with a two-point goal at 5:28 in the second period. The Ignition owned a 12-5 advantage at the half.

Doug Rice ignited things for Detroit in the third quarter with a two-point goal off an assist from Mack at 8:03. The Storm's Ian Bennett responded with a two-point score of his own at 9:23 in the third period. Ricardinho closed out the quarter for the Ignition with his second two-point goal of the night at 12:07 to bring the score to 16-7.

Less than two minutes into the game's final stanza, Moreira booted a two-point goal past Storm keeper Jeff Richey. Mack tallied another three points for Detroit at 7:05 with an assist from Rice. Selaidopoulos scored his second two-point goal of the match at 7:29 with an assist from defender Josh Rife.

Mack would finish the night with a hat trick, as the midfielder scored his third goal of the night at 12:11.

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Dearborn Music has the area's largest selection of Rock, Jazz, Blues, Classical, and much more!

WE BUY USED CDs, DVDs, AND LPs!

We have a large collection of rock memorabilia including t-shirts, posters, hats, etc.

313-561-1000

Everybody Matters.

Helping families become stronger



Experience tells us that the best way to help the most people is to focus on the underlying causes of the most serious problems. Here in the Plymouth/Canton Community, we're focused on critical issues affecting families like health care, nutrition, family counseling and assistance in times of crisis.

It takes the whole community working together to reach our goals in these areas. So we bring together people from all across the community – people from industry and business, faith groups, non-profit, and people like you. If it requires fundraising, developing community partnerships, or just getting people to work together, that's what we do.

Your United Way contribution goes to work bringing lasting change, right where you live. Because that's what matters.

Plymouth Community United Way Investing In Our Community

Your gift to Plymouth Community United Way makes a positive difference in the lives of thousands of people in the Plymouth/Canton community.



Thank you. Everybody Matters.

734-453-6879

www.plymouthunitedway.org

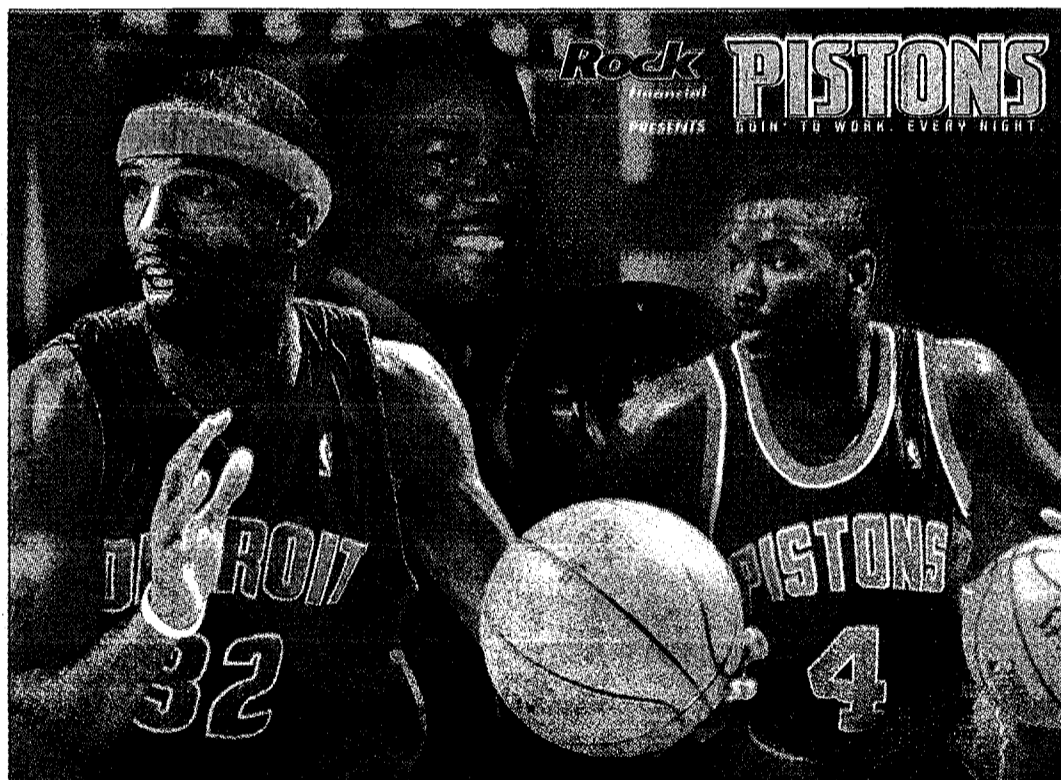
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\$89 4 TICKETS • 4 HOT DOGS • 4 SODAS
PLUS A PISTONS GRAB BAG

TOMORROW • 8 PM vs. PACERS

• Pistons NBA Finals MVP Poster to first 7,500 fans courtesy of DTE Energy

CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE PALACE

MON, 12/31 • 3:30 PM vs. BUCKS

• Pistons Rookie Poster to first 7,500 fans courtesy of Bud Light



FOR TICKETS, CALL 248-377-0100, VISIT THE PALACE BOX OFFICE, ANY TICKETMASTER LOCATION OR LOG ON TO PISTONS.COM



YOU ARE INVITED

Representatives From
HOWE
will be in Plymouth

Wednesday
January 9, 2008

7:00 - 9:00 pm

Location:

The Inn at St. John's
Golf & Conference Center

44045 Five Mile Road
Plymouth, MI 48170

(Informal/Complimentary)

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Howe students achieve through
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organization



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Thursday

PUZZLE CORNER

Challenging fun for ALL ages

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

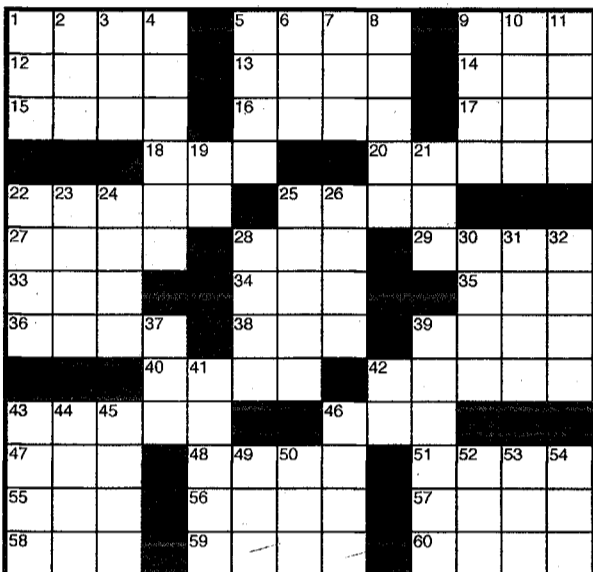
- ACROSS**
- Ceremonial fire
 - Robins' beaks
 - Itch
 - Thoroughfare
 - Oil exporter
 - Through
 - Felt grateful
 - "Nautilus" skipper
 - Unit of energy
 - Ait, on the Seine
 - Camel halts
 - Antique brooch
 - Family man
 - Teller's stack
 - Lot of bills
 - Listen carefully
 - German name part
 - Put out of sight
 - Magnon
 - Winds down
 - Unser and Gore
 - Comic
 - Lebowitz
 - Intends
 - Wet thoroughly

Answer to Previous Puzzle

SLAM FLED RUG
HALO IAGO UTA
ASAN BIGWHEEL
WHISPER NU
OAR PEBBLE
HAVOC ITD YAM
OXEN ADS TERM
LES SPA DUSKY
ESTATE POT
SO ARMORED
CUSHION RARE
IRA CATO ETNA
INN STIR DEER

8-9 © 2007 United Feature Syndicate, Inc.

- DOWN**
- Ski lodge instructor
 - Zippy's word
 - Funny Charlotte -
 - Whirlpools
 - Largest digit
 - Umbrage
 - Comic-book thud
 - Meddle
 - Montand of the movies
 - Blarney Stone locale
 - Badgers
 - Cry of surprise
 - Murmur of content
 - Soon
 - Patch up
 - Beach toys
 - Builds onto
 - Kapow!
 - Neutral shade
 - Important decades
 - Ready to serve
 - "My gal" of song
 - Dinosaur bone
 - Greek column style
 - Daphne Maurier
 - Graph paper pattern
 - Mariner's shout
 - Unfrequented
 - Foundation
 - Galleon cargo
 - Cabbie's income
 - Gloating cry
 - Wetlands
 - Go undercover



SUDOKU

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

Fun By The Numbers

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

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

SEEK AND FIND

FIND THESE WORDS IN THE PUZZLE BELOW.

- | | | |
|----------|---------|---------|
| CINNAMON | OREGANO | SAFFRON |
| GARLIC | PAPRIKA | SAGE |
| GINGER | PARSLEY | SALT |
| MARJORAM | PEPPER | THYME |

THE WORDS READ UP, DOWN AND ACROSS.

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

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

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

CHECK YOUR ANSWERS HERE

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

Market Place

6000-6980
Announcements
LOOK HERE

Household Goods 7160

Place those unwanted household items for only **\$28*** for 30 days with the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers! Call Us Today: 1-866-818-7653

Miscellaneous For Sale 7600

DIRECTV Satellite television. FREE equipment, FREE 4 room installation, FREE HD or DVR receiver upgrade packages from \$29.99/mo. Call Direct Sat TV for details 1-800-380-8939

GET A NEW COMPUTER Brand name laptops & desktops bad or NO credit-no problem. Smallest weekly payments available. Its yours NOW-call 1-800-618-3765

MEMORY FOAM THERAPEUTIC NASA-VISCO MATTRESSES WHOLESALE! As seen on TV. Twin \$299, Full \$349, Queen \$399, King \$499. All sizes available! DORMIA Comfortaire Electric adjustables \$799.00 FREE DELIVERY. 25-Year Warranty. 60 night trial. 1-800-ATSLLEEP (1-800-287-5337) www.mattressdr.com

Tools 7525

Place those unwanted household items for only **\$28*** for 30 days with the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers! Call Us Today: 1-866-818-7653

Dogs 7840

YORKIE PUPPIES-AKC 11 Weeks old, 2 females, 1 male, tails, dew claws, puppy shots done, vet checked. \$900. 248-615-7768

Horses & Equipment 7860

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Household Pets 7880

Westland Petland

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Himalayan Kittens Parrots

HOLIDAY PUPPY SALE

6 MONTHS* SAME AS CASH**

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*Limited Time Offer

Petland Across from Westland Mall (734) 367-9906 www.petland.com

Wanted to Buy 7540

MOTORCYCLES WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE Get cash for the New Year! Call 586-727-3697

Cats 7830

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Dogs 7840

CHIHAUHAU PUPPIES Puppies, 2 male, 1 female. \$350/best. Call 9am-11pm 734-728-8192

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Mini Dachshund Ready for Christmas! Longhair, smooth, Black/Tan, Red, AKC, shots, wormed & health guarantee. 734-812-3170

Pomeranian - AKC Adults and pups. \$350-\$500, most colors. Call: (734) 522-2772

Shih-Tzu Puppies Ready now, 9wks old, shots & wormed. Small size. 734-728-5467

7000-7780
Merchandise

Household Goods 7160

BED - \$75 QUEEN PILLLOW TOP Mattress Set, NEW in Plastic. Can Deliver 734-891-8481

BED - \$225 KING PILLLOW TOP Mattress Set. NEW in bag. Can deliver. 734-328-0030

Appliances 7180

GE SIDE-BY-SIDE FRIDGE White, water/cubes in door, 26 cubic ft., mint cond. \$275/best. 734-718-5550

Bargain Buys 7200

CARPET BERBER OR PLUSH Whole house of carpet. Call for details. \$979 or less. 248-673-8542

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BED - \$65 - 1 ABSOLUTE ALL BRAND NEW PILLLOW-TOP Queen Mattress in plastic. Can deliver 734-231-6622

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Musical Instruments 7510

CONSOLE PIANO Leonard. (Grinnell Bros.) Matte, black finish. Weathered, rustic look. Plays well. Compact body w/full 88-key keyboard. Perfect for small home, apt. or cottage. \$900. Call Mary: 734-285-2685 or Grant at Pianoworks in Ferndale: 248-541-6334

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Recommends that you contact a Realtor*

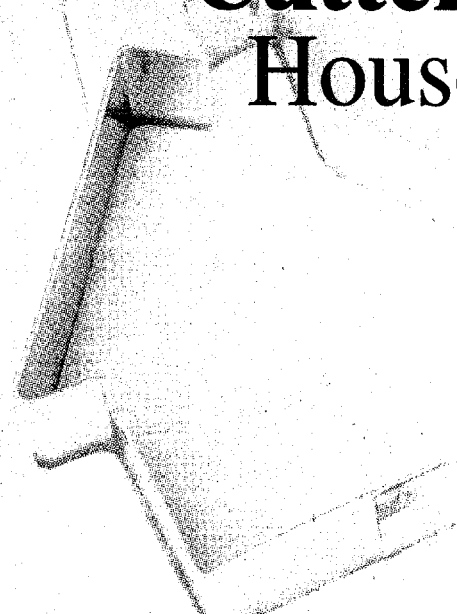
Metropolitan Consolidated Association of Realtors
901 Tower Drive, Suite 190
Troy, MI 48098
248 879-5730



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Don't Settle for a Cookie Cutter House



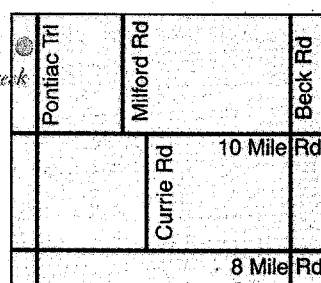
We customize the entire process from the model you choose to the way we help you get into it.

\$25,000 OFF base price & up to 2 years of your existing mortgage paid* (See sales office for more details.)

- Saddle Creek of South Lyon (off Pontiac Tr. just N. of 11 Mile Rd)
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- South Lyon Schools
- Low Lyon Twp. Taxes
- Greenbuilt and Energy Star Certification programs available

Sales model open 11am-5pm
Closed Thursdays & Fridays
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Saddle Creek

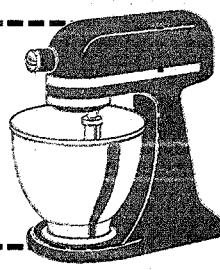


Win a KitchenAid Mixer!

Drop off completed entry blank to either our Saddle Creek Models or email to dawnh@newbabcockhomes.com by December 30th. 1 entry per family.

Enter our Drawing for a chance to Win!

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Address: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____



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0.9% APR Plus \$3000 on select models to qualified buyers

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REBATES UP TO \$7000 on select models

GET \$500 CASH All Sign & Drive Leases*

THE ONLY WESTERN WAYNE COUNTY FORD DEALER OPEN EVERY SATURDAY FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE! OPEN DEC 29TH 9-3

2008 FUSION SE
2.3L 14 engine, 5-speed automatic transmission, P205/60R16 all season and more. Stock #8C8104 Was \$20,295
NOW \$16,819*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$259 PER MO.	\$137 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2447.07 Due at Signing!

2008 FOCUS SES 4 DOOR
2.0L DOHC eng, auto trans, P195/60R15 BSW tires, Sirius satellite radio & much more. Stock #8C9033 Was \$17,005
NOW \$14,964*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$263 PER MO.	\$156 PER MO.

GET \$100 CASH BACK! \$2611.91 Due at Signing!

2008 TAURUS AWD LIMITED
3.5L V-6 Duratec engine, 6 speed auto trans, P225/55R18 BSW tires and much more. Stock #8C7059 Was \$29,445
NOW \$24,420*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$334 PER MO.	\$204 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2623.55 Due at Signing!

2008 F150 4x4 XLT SUPERCAB
5.4L FFV V-8, elec. 4 spd auto, O/D, P255/70R17 OWL all-terrain, 3.55 ratio lim. slip axle, 7150# GVWR pkg., elec. shift-on-fly, trailer tow pkg., 17" Mach alum w/pain accents. Stock #8T6017 Was \$33,475
NOW \$25,129*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$334 PER MO.	\$205 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2639.14 Due at Signing!

2008 EDGE FWD SE
Automatic O/D trans, 3.5L V6 eng, 17" painted alum wheels, P235/65R17 BSW tires & more. Stock #8T3035 Was \$26,094
NOW \$22,589*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$336 PER MO.	\$210 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2556.34 Due at Signing!

2008 ESCAPE XLT Powermoon • Sat. Radio
Auto, air, fog lamps, power driver's seat, privacy glass, safety canopy, conv pkg and more. Stock #8T9170 Was \$23,020
NOW \$19,259*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$337 PER MO.	\$209 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2524.43 Due at Signing!

2008 EXPLORER XLT 4 DOOR 4X2
Air, illum, visors, 4.0L SOHC V6 eng, 5 spd auto trans w/ O/D, P245/65R17 A/S tires, 17" cast alum whls. Stock #8T3005 Was \$27,710
NOW \$21,004*

24 MONTH LEASE

SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$338 PER MO.	\$210 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2700.47 Due at Signing!

2008 TAURUS X FWD LTD
3.5L V-6 Duratec engine, 6 speed auto transmission, 60/40 2nd row 3-passenger bench seat. Stock #8T0300 Was \$30,700
NOW \$25,603*

24 MONTH LEASE

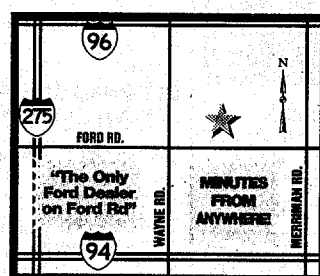
SIGN & DRIVE	\$2000 DOWN
\$366 PER MO.	\$236 PER MO.

GET \$500 CASH BACK! \$2656.34 Due at Signing!

NORTH BROTHERS Ford

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Tues., Wed., Fri 9-6
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**24 month lease, A-Plan eligibility, 10,500 miles per year, w/approved tier 0 or 1 credit, with lease renewal cash subject to program changes.
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Corvettes!

Immediate Delivery!

Save up to \$10,000!

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DEC. 29th
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2008 CHEVROLET MALIBU
NOW IN STOCK
STARTING AT **\$18,684***

2008 CHEVROLET COBALT
ZERO DOWN \$0 SEC. DEP.
Protection Package, Rear Spoiler, Air, stereo & much more.
GM EMPLOYEE 39 mo/39,000 mile lease. Total due \$223.
\$223 PER MO
NOW EVERYBODY PURCHASE \$14,311 - \$2000 REBATE
\$12,311*

2008 IMPALA
OnStar, side head curtain airbags, power windows & locks, tilt, cruise, power seat, stereo CD, rear def. #8C9186
\$229 DOWN \$229 PER MO.

PICK A TRAILBLAZER - PICK A PAYMENT

2008 CHEVROLET TRAILBLAZER LT 1
Power windows, power lock, tilt, cruise, air conditioning, deep tinted glass, locking differential, sunroof, OnStar, AM/FM stereo CD, auto overdrive trans, much more!

	REAR WHEEL DRIVE 8T3887			4 WHEEL DRIVE 8T3886				
	Down	10,000 Miles	12,000 Miles	15,000 Miles	Down	10,000 Miles	12,000 Miles	15,000 Miles
GM Employee 39 Month Lease	\$3000	\$179	\$191	\$211	\$3000	\$204	\$218	\$239
	\$2000	\$206	\$220	\$240	\$2000	\$232	\$246	\$268
	\$1000	\$235	\$248	\$268	\$1000	\$261	\$275	\$296
	\$0	\$263	\$277	\$314	\$0	\$289	\$303	\$325
Non Employee 39 Month Lease	\$3000	\$211	\$225	\$245	\$3000	\$239	\$254	\$275
	\$2000	\$240	\$253	\$274	\$2000	\$268	\$282	\$304
	\$1000	\$268	\$281	\$301	\$1000	\$296	\$311	\$332
	\$0	\$296	\$310	\$330	\$0	\$325	\$339	\$382

36 PAYMENTS UNDER \$300

2008 CHEVROLET AVEO
LOADED! Look at this Car

★★★★★ CRASH RATING
AM/FM CD MP3, 6 prem. speakers, cruise, auto overdrive trans, delay wipers, air, tilt, digital clock, split fold rear seat, remote trunk release, power rack & pinion steering, disc brakes, stainless steel exhaust, front & side impact air bags, daytime running lamps, fold away body colored dual mirrors, tire pressure monitoring system, halogen headlamps, front & rear floor mats, rear defogger, recline lumbar adj. seats, visor vanity mirrors, front & rear pass. assist handles. Stock #8C9086.
Was \$14,195 • Everyone \$13,671
Rebate - \$1500
ALL THIS PLUS UP TO 38 MPG and 5 Year 100,000 Mile GM Warranty!
NOW **\$12,171***
GM employees save additional \$600

2008 SILVERADO
EXT. CAB
GM EMPLOYEE & FAMILY
\$195 PER MO.

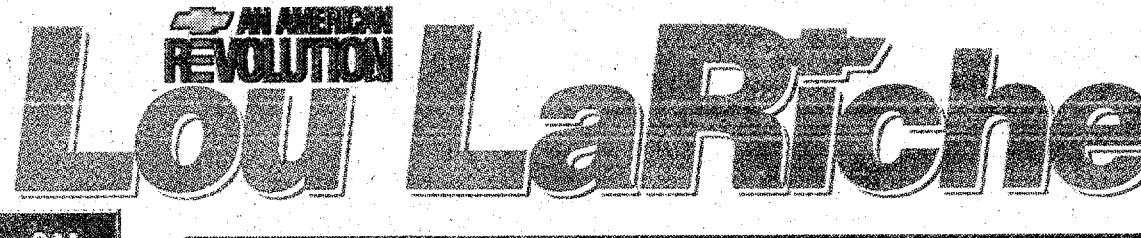
OUT THE DOOR PRICING! Includes tax!

Power package, trailer tow, locking diff., power windows & locks, tilt, cruise, air, LT 1 package, auto overdrive. Example #8T4019
39 Mo/32,500 miles lease \$3000 down \$184 1st payment, \$200 sec. \$251 sales tax, \$103 title trans & doc fee. Total due \$3761.

\$1000 REBATES ON SILVERADO TAHOE & AVALANCHE

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CHEVROLET

	***Total Due Rear Wheel				***Total Due 4 Wheel			
	Down	10,000 Miles	12,000 Miles	15,000 Miles	Down	10,000 Miles	12,000 Miles	15,000 Miles
GM Employee 39 Month Lease	\$3000	\$3404	\$3416	\$3461	\$3000	\$3429	\$3468	\$3539
	\$2000	\$2456	\$2470	\$2540	\$2000	\$2507	\$2546	\$2593
	\$1000	\$1510	\$1548	\$1593	\$1000	\$1561	\$1600	\$1646
	\$0	\$563	\$602	\$689	\$0	\$639	\$653	\$700
Non Employee 39 Month Lease	\$3000	\$3461	\$3500	\$3545	\$3000	\$3514	\$3554	\$3600
	\$2000	\$2540	\$2553	\$2598	\$2000	\$2593	\$2607	\$2654
	\$1000	\$1593	\$1606	\$1651	\$1000	\$1646	\$1661	\$1707
	\$0	\$646	\$660	\$705	\$0	\$700	\$739	\$832

**Prices include applicable rebates plus destination. GM employee purchase. **Lease with option to purchase at term for pre-determined amount. Net incentives plus tax & lic. Excess miles @ 25¢ per mile. Lessee responsible for damage, wear & tear.

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YEAR-END CELEBRATION

JACK DEMMER FORD

START THE NEW YEAR IN A NEW FORD

OPEN SATURDAY • DEC. 29TH • 10AM - 3PM

YEAR-END CELEBRATION

2008 ESCAPE XLT
Privacy glass, power windows & locks, power seat, fog lamps, auto headlamps, tilt, speed control, AM/FM CD and more. Stock #81419. Was \$22,030

24 Month Lease
\$18,812* **\$213**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

Rates as low as **0.9%** on select 2008's

2008 TAURUS LIMITED
Leather, 18" aluminum wheels, heated dual power seats, 6-disc CD, auto temp control, air, anti theft, auto headlamps, power windows and locks, power mirrors and more. Stock #80634. Was \$27,595

24 Month Lease
\$22,810* **\$195**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

2008 FUSION SE
2.3L 14 eng, 5-speed auto trans, P205/60R16 all season tires, air, speed/tilt wheel, pwr W/L, perimeter anti-theft system, 1st & 2nd row air curtains, fog lamps, 6-way power seat. Stock #80758. Was \$20,295

24 Month Lease
\$16,818* **\$131**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

2008 FOCUS SE COUPE
Auto, air, aluminum wheels, power windows & locks, 15" alum wheels, remote keyless, message center. Stock #81227. Was \$16,510

24 Month Lease
\$14,035* **\$118**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

2008 EDGE SE
Auto head lamps, keyless entry, power windows & locks, privacy glass, speed control, tilt, front & side impact air bags. Stock #81277. Was \$26,930

24 Month Lease
\$22,835* **\$210**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

2008 F150 S. CAB XLT
5.4 V8, lim, slip axle, 7700 GVW, tow & go, 17" alum wheels & much more. Stock #80914. Was \$33,775

24 Month Lease
\$25,385* **\$213**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

Rebates up to **\$4500** on select 2008's

2008 EXPLORER XLT
4.0L SOHC, 5-speed auto OD trans, conven. group, cast alum whls, auto lamp headlights, and much, much more. Stock #81168. Was \$26,740

24 Month Lease
\$20,207* **\$199**** Per Mo.
\$2500 due at signing

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Tues • Wed • Fri 8 am - 6 pm

Service Hours
Monday - Friday 7 am - 6 pm

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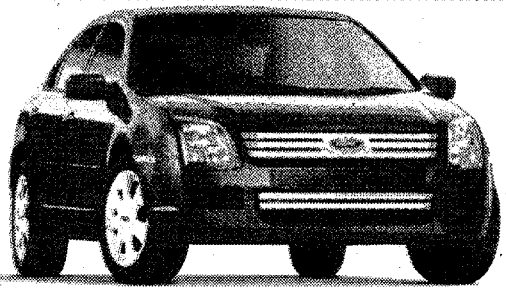
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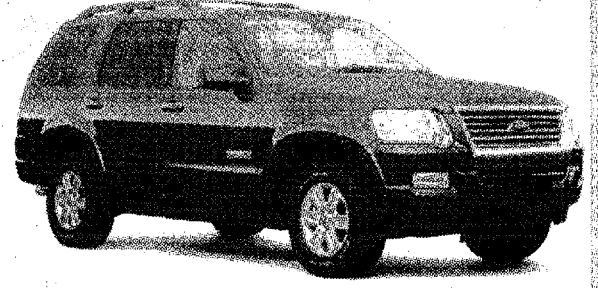
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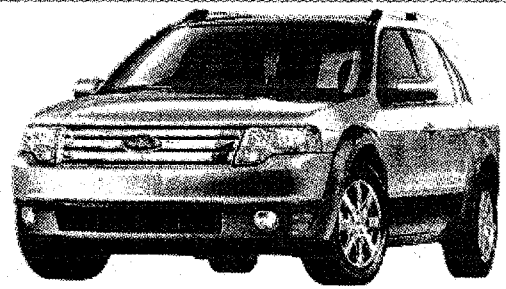
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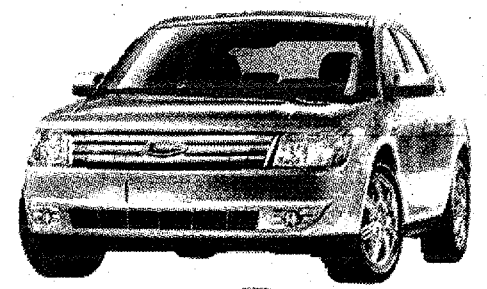
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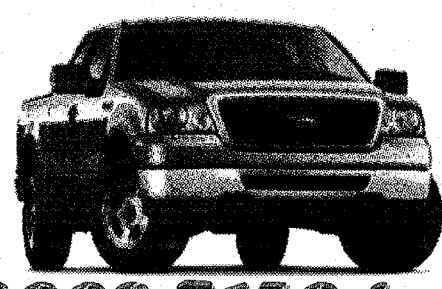
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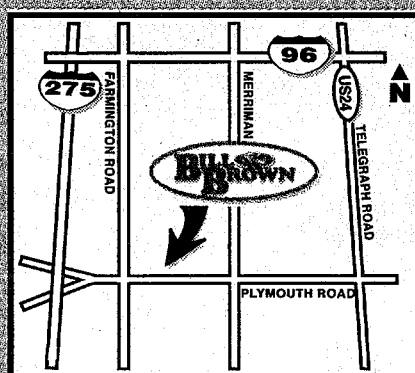
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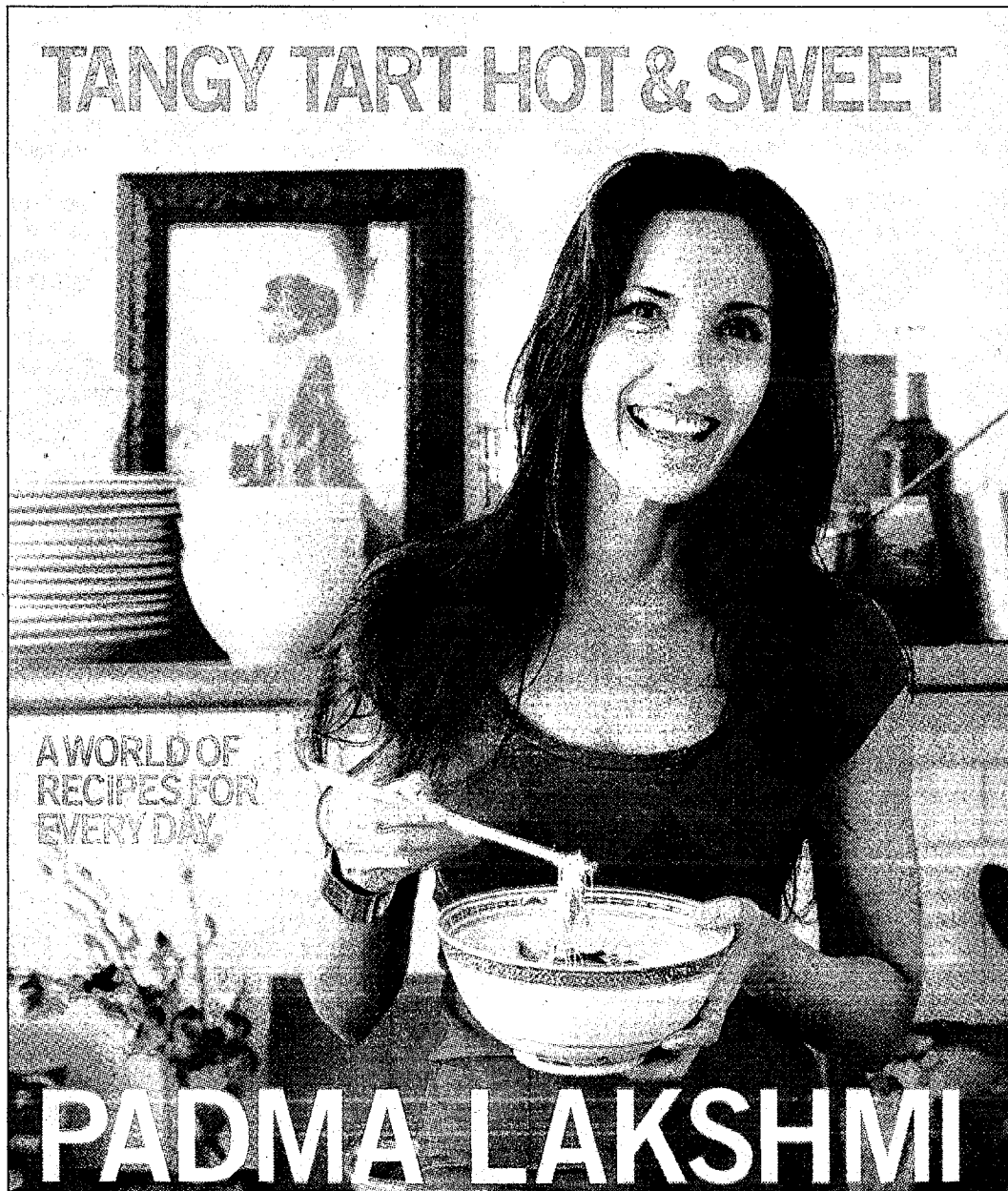


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Padma's Party

ACCENTS



Have a Tangy Tart Hot Sweet New Year

BY WENDSY VON BUSKIRK
STAFF WRITER

Padma Lakshmi is so stylish she elevates grilled cheese to an art form.

The model, author, cook and host of Bravo's hit series *Top Chef* shares secrets for making meals magical in her new cookbook *Tangy Tart Hot & Sweet: A World of Recipes for Every Day* (Weinstein Books, \$34.95).

Experimental cooks can take pages from the book's appetizer section to throw a New Year's Eve party with global flavor.

"What I do a lot of times is take simple classic recipes that we're all familiar with and add two or three ingredients that give them a varnish of personality and international flair," Lakshmi said during a recent interview. "Once you get the ingredients they're easy."

Lakshmi was born in India and raised in America. Growing up, her palate was influenced by a Peruvian babysitter, her mother's Caribbean boyfriend, a playmate from the Philippines and culinary field trips to ethnic neighborhoods like Chinatown and Spanish Harlem. Her career has since taken her to Singapore, Spain, Paris and beyond.

With ease, Lakshmi has melded tastes from around the world into her home cooking, and guests to the fabulous dinner parties she used to host with former husband, author Salman Rushdie, took notice. She was soon tapped to write her first cookbook, *Easy Exotic*, and host her first show on the Food Network, *Padma's Passport*.

In her new book, she continues to play with fresh takes on traditional dishes.

Macaroni and cheese is punched up with pickled jalapenos and Mexican oregano. Crab cakes go South Indian with shredded coconut and mango powder.

Saffron, tamarind and sumac make frequent appearances, but not without explanation. Padma starts each recipe by detailing its unique flavors, and the book is interspersed with instructions on how to work with ingredients like pomegranate seeds, Za'atar powder and chutneys. The book also contains beautiful photos and essays about Padma's colorful life and the people who have influenced her cooking.

Many of Lakshmi's recipes are perfect for parties, including an array of tiny sandwiches that are a snap to prepare.

"A few years ago, I started seeing what looked like bite-size grilled cheese sandwiches being passed around at parties that were very fashionably catered," she writes.

"It occurred to me that if these high-end types could steal such a homemade specialty and turn it into a party food, then I could steal it back for parties at home."

Eric Schilbe, a Livonia resident and sous chef at Steve & Rocky's in Novi, got a chance to test some of Lakshmi's recipes firsthand when she visited Detroit during her book tour.

Lakshmi read passages from *Tangy Tart Hot & Sweet* and signed copies during the Toll Brothers' Tastes of Autumn event in November. For the party, Schilbe prepared Mexican Cornbread with Jalapeno and Chorizo; Grilled Cheese Toasties with Portobello and Bacon; Deviled Eggs with Serrano Chiles; and Tea Sandwiches with Lemon, Honey and Ginger.

"I liked her cookbook," Schilbe said. "It's definitely accessible to the general public, especially since nowadays a lot of the Indian products and Mexican products she uses are available at specialty grocery stores like Hiller's and Busch's."

Hosting a New Year's Eve soiree? Make it exotic with Padma Lakshmi's take on traditional party foods.

TEA SANDWICHES WITH LEMON, HONEY AND GINGER

"These graceful little triangles ... can be made so easily and are perfect for whipping up whenever guests descend unexpectedly."

10 slices of good white bread, toasted on both sides
2 preserved lemon halves (sold in specialty stores)
2 teaspoons honey

1 teaspoon crushed dried red peppers
1 tablespoon freshly minced ginger
10 thin slices of a hard Italian cheese like pecorino or caciotta

Arrange the toast on a platter. Chop the preserved lemons, being sure to remove any seeds first. Place them in a processor or blender with the honey, red pepper, and ginger; make a smooth paste. Spread the paste on the toast and top with a slice of cheese. Diagonally cut each slice to make equal triangles from each slice. You can serve as is or heat in a 350 degree oven for a few minutes, just until cheese is melted and toasted. Either way, these are wonderful with tea, or, even better, a glass of sherry. Serves 6-8.

DEVILED EGGS WITH SERRANO CHILES

"I started making these very retro appetizers for cocktail parties because many of my guests were on high protein, low starch diets ... Green chiles and coriander give them a fresh spiky taste."

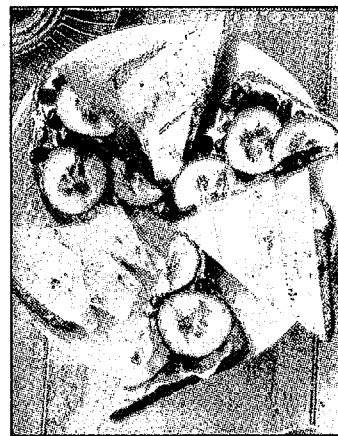
1/3 cup mayonnaise
1 serrano chile, seeded and minced
3 grape tomatoes, seeded and diced finely with skin
2 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
salt
A squirt of fresh lemon juice, about a teaspoon
6 hard-boiled eggs

Combine all the ingredients, except the eggs, in a bowl. Set aside.

Carefully peel the eggs, without scratching the whites. Slice each egg lengthwise and toss the yolks into the bowl with all the other ingredients.

Arrange the whites on a platter. Mix the contents of the bowl well by mashing them together with a fork; add salt to taste. Using a spoon, put a bit of the yolk mixture back into each of the whites and serve them on a platter at room temperature. Serves 4-6.

Please see RECIPES, D5



Tea Sandwiches with Lemon, Honey and Ginger make perfect party passers. Also pictured are tea sandwiches with cucumber and pomegranate seeds.

Caring for critters

Christmas is over, but don't stop giving when it comes to backyard critters.

The Humane Society of the United States reports that raccoons, squirrels, skunks and birds benefit from human help throughout the season.

According to Laura Simon, field director of urban wildlife for HSUS, "Although wild animals are able to adapt to survive cold winter temperatures and food limitations, there are small things that people can do to help them this time of year. We suggest several 'gifts of the season' that can give our backyard neighbors a warm boost during the holidays."

■ Keep bird feeders full in the winter since food availability is very limited for non-migratory birds.

■ Fill large pinecones with peanut butter and roll them in sunflower seeds. Attach a string to the top and hang from trees for birds.

■ Invest in a heated birdbath and keep it filled all winter long. Birds need the water at this time of year when most natural sources may be frozen.

■ Put decorative snowflakes 4 inches apart on any windows where birds might hit, or have hit in the past.

■ Put a cover over any window wells around your house to prevent animals from becoming stuck. Animals, such as skunks, who have poor climbing abilities commonly fall into window wells.

■ Use only environmentally-friendly sidewalk salt for melting ice such as Safe Paws Ice Melter. Regular sidewalk salts pollute the environment and can irritate cats' and dogs' paws.

■ Get to know your backyard wild neighbors by going on an adventure around your own yard in the snow. Try to identify different species by looking at tracks and other signs they leave behind, such as partial remains of food like cracked nuts or twigs. Buy a good wildlife tracking guide - or give one as a gift - to learn more and to better appreciate these animals.

■ The HSUS Wild Neighbors Program promotes non-lethal means for resolving conflicts between people and wildlife and cultivates understanding and appreciation for wild animals commonly found in cities and towns.

For more information www.humanesociety.org/wild-neighborhoods.

Celebrate year's end with Italian wines

As the largest import segment, Italian wines scored in 2007. End the year by seeking out some of Italy's world-famous wines, such as Barolo and Barbaresco from regions with the same name. Both are located in northwest Italy (Piedmont region) around the city of Alba and both wines are made from the nebbiolo grape, a name derived from 'nebbia', the Piedmontese word for fog. Others to discover are Dolcetto d'Alba and Barbera d'Alba, produced from grapes of the same names, that also originate from this area. Asti is located about 20 miles northeast of Alba and home to Barbera d'Asti.



Focus on Wine
Ray & Eleanor Heald

then life in the Piedmont has been stable, allowing its viticulture to evolve and winemaking to improve. Identification of suitable areas for growing each grape variety and the techniques for vinification and aging made early progress.

The present Marchese is Alberto di Gresy who was born

in Milan in 1952, and today, armed with a degree in business administration, smartly leads the winery bearing the di Gresy name. Unwilling to sell grapes to wine producers who took all of the credit for wine made from his premium grapes, di Gresy began to supervise vineyard operations on the family's estates and in 1973 started making his own wine. His objective was to produce the very best wine from his own grapes using modern technology, while continuing to respect the Piedmont tradition. It is di Gresy's intention to capture the personality of each vineyard estate in the bottle.

VINEYARD ESTATES

The Martinenga Estate is located in the heart of

Barbaresco where di Gresy grows nebbiolo, barbera and cabernet sauvignon on hillside locations with ideal sun exposure at elevations of 700 to 950 feet. Newer vineyards of sauvignon blanc and chardonnay are grown at lower elevations. Three vineyard-designated Barbarescos are produced from this property, Martinenga, Camp Gros and Gaiun.

The Monte Aribaldo Estate, located just over one mile from Martinenga, has a splendid view of the Piedmont, framed by the Italian Alps. The vineyard extends along a ridge that has mixed volcanic and chalk soils. Here di Gresy grows Dolcetto d'Alba, chardonnay and sauvignon blanc.

Please see HEADS, D5

WINE PICKS

Although Italian wines are the number one imports, CABERNET SAUVIGNON remains the top-selling varietal red wine. The following from California offer some fine drinking in a broad range of prices.

Outstanding

2003 Arrowood Sonoma County Cabernet Sauvignon \$100

Excellent

2004 Stags' Leap Napa Valley \$48

2003 PreVail West Face \$50

2004 Sbragia Monte Rosso \$50

2004 Arrowood Sonoma County \$50

2003 Dry Creek Vineyards Endeavour \$55

2005 Parallel Napa Valley \$55

2004 Duckhorn Napa Valley \$60

2004 Flora Springs Napa Valley Trilogy \$65

2003 Kenwood Vineyards Artist Series \$70

2004 Sbragia Wall Vineyard \$75 -- 1st release

2004 Sbragia Rancho Del Oso (Howell Mountain) \$75

2003 Gallo Family Estate Northern Sonoma \$80

2003 PreVail Back Forty \$95

2001 Mc William's '1877' Cabernet/Shiraz \$100

2004 Beringer Napa Valley Private Reserve \$116

2004 Pillar Rock Stags Leap District \$125 (available online at www.pillar-rockvineyard.com)

Very Good

2005 Gallo Family Sonoma Reserve \$15

2004 Summers Andriana's Cuvee Napa Valley \$25

2004 Valley of the Moon Sonoma County Cuvee de la Luna \$30

Please see PICKS, D5

Astrophysicist says Bethlehem star probably appeared in April

BY TOM COYNE
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (AP) — It's long been a puzzle for Christian astronomers, and now a professor from the University of Notre Dame thinks he has it figured out — almost, anyway.

His quest: discovering just what "the star in the East" was that led wise men to travel to Bethlehem 2,000 years ago.

As a theoretical astrophysicist, Grant Mathews had hoped the answer would be spectacular, something like a supernova. But two years of research have led him to a more ordinary conclusion. The heavenly sign around the time of the birth of Jesus Christ was likely an unusual alignment of planets, the sun and the moon.

And it most likely occurred in April, 6 B.C.

Not a lot was written about the star in the Bible. In the Gospel of Matthew it says: "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him."

The star, though, has long been immortalized in songs, plays and movies. Astronomers, theologians and historians for hundreds of years have been trying to determine exactly which star might have inspired the biblical writing. German astronomer Johannes Kepler proposed in 1604 that the star was a conjunction of Mars, Jupiter and Saturn in 7 B.C.

The advantage Mathews has

over Kepler and others who have pondered the question is that he had access to the databases of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

"In principle, we can see any star that was ever made from the beginning of time if we knew where to look. So the question is, could we find a star that could be a good candidate for what showed up then?" he said.

Mathews found several possibilities. He began by posing three questions he would ask when trying to find the answer to any astronomical event: When did it occur? What were its characteristics? Did anyone else see it?

The Gospel of Matthew indicates Jesus was born in Bethlehem when Herod was

king. Roman historian Flavius Josephus wrote that Herod died after an eclipse of the moon before the Passover. Mathews said among the possibilities are 6 B.C., 5 B.C., 1 B.C. or 1 A.D. The star could have appeared up to two years before the wise men arrived in Jerusalem, he said.

Mathews believes that means the Christmas star could have appeared anywhere from 8 to 4 B.C. — fitting in with some scholars' views on when Jesus was born.

Among the characteristics written about the star was that it appeared before sunrise and that it appeared to "rest in the sky." Mathews also found writings from Korean and Chinese astronomers of an event about 4 B.C. which described a comet with no tail

that didn't move.

Using that set of facts, Mathews found several possibilities, including supernovas, novas and planetary alignments.

Mathews found two possible supernovas in the right period, but said one was probably too low on the horizon to be seen. The other supernova is known as Kes 75. But it was 60,000 light years away and may not have been particularly spectacular.

"There's no real convincing evidence this happened right at 2000 years ago, but it could be in the range of being right because it's in the right location," he said.

He also found a number of nova that also could have been the Christmas star. The one he thinks is the most likely candi-

date is known as Nova Aquilae V603. The problem with novas and comets, though, is that they were believed in ancient times to be a sign of disaster, not a portent of good things to come.

For that reason, Mathews believes the Christmas star is most likely an alignment of planets. He said there are three likely times for this:


- Feb. 20, 6 B.C., when Mars, Jupiter and Saturn aligned in the constellation Pisces.
- April 17, 6 B.C., when the sun, Jupiter, the moon and Saturn aligned in the constellation Aries while Venus and Mars were in neighboring constellations.
- June 17, 2 B.C., when Jupiter and Venus were closely aligned in Leo.

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To mail copy: The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150 or Fax to (734) 953-2121

FOOD CALENDAR

If you have an item for the food calendar, please submit it at least two weeks prior to the event to Ken Abramczyk, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham 48009, e-mail

kabramcz@hometownlife.com, or fax (248) 644-1314.

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Whole Foods Market
Big Game Snack Attack, sample snacks, noon-3 p.m., Jan. 26; Snug in a Mug, sample hot beverages, 4-7 p.m. Jan. 31, 7350 Orchard Lake Rd., West Bloomfield; Crock-pot classics, part of Chef Mama series, 7 p.m. Jan. 15, Chef

Mama Cooking with Kids, 4:30 p.m. Jan. 29, to register for Chef Mama classes, call (248) 652-2100, 1404 Walton Blvd. Rochester Hills; Soups for the Soul, 1-4 p.m. Jan. 6, Health and Wellness Fair, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Jan. 19, Big Game Preview Tasting, noon to 4 p.m. Jan. 26 and Feb. 2; 2880 W. Maple, Troy (248) 649-9600.

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PICKS FROM PAGE D1

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Publish: December 20 & 27, 2007

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Handy Pro Handyman Services, Inc.
734-254-9160 Plymouth Area
248-476-4435 Farmington Area
www.handypro.com

Having a professional bring new life to home improvement projects, fix-it jobs, and the occasional 'honey-do' tasks is the main appeal of Handy Pro Handyman Services, Inc. of Plymouth. Owner Keith Paul has made customer satisfaction his number one priority in his 11 years since first opening his business with his wife Debra in 1996.

He said he was inspired to start the business by a contractor who ripped off Debra's grandmother. Keith knew that homeowners deserved to have work done on their homes by honest, experienced, and reputable people. That's why it is important to gain the trust and respect from every customer. After all, Handy Pro contractors are invited guests into people's homes and they take that responsibility very seriously.

"Homeowners are letting us into their homes -- it is a very personal thing," Keith said. "We take it as an honor that people would trust us in their homes."

For that and many other reasons, Handy Pro employees are carefully screened and go through an intense training session, including hands-on and classroom training. Keith and the other franchised Handy Pro Handyman Services in Minneapolis, Honolulu, and Dallas are licensed builders and everyone who works for them are approved by the states they work in. All franchises are fully bonded and insured.

The Plymouth location currently employs 13 technicians who specialize in all types of home improvement projects such as drywall repairs, painting, caulking, and gutter repairs. Keith said that his company's specialty "is completing a homeowner's 'to-do' list."

The success of Handy Pro Handyman Services is shown in the recent sales figures. July 2007 was the company's best month in their history. That's an interesting statistic considering the slumping Michigan economy. But Keith said that a down economy is often good for his business.

"People are not selling their homes in this economy; they are upgrading them," he said. "They are putting in new doors, shelving, shutters, shower tiling, etc."

But if customers plan to sell their homes, Handy Pro Handyman Services is also the place to turn to. Keith said that cosmetic fixes to a home are "the best thing you can do. Painting is usually the best return on your investment. New fixtures, ceiling fans, updated lighting, and even ensuring that every door opens and closes can be very important, too. In Michigan you have to make your house stand out."

He added that his same customers will call 2-3 times each year with requests for something as simple as hanging a picture to remodeling a bathroom. Handy Pro Handyman Services' customers are given a one-year guarantee with every job, too.

With that fall season approaching, Keith's technicians will be busy repairing gutters, making them ready for the winter months. He hopes that customers keep the phones ringing because he wants to keep his crew busy. "If we take good care of our staff they, in turn, take good care of our customers," he added. "And we have a great staff."

Handy Pro Handyman Services is located at 995 South Main Street. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nights and weekend hours are available upon request. For more information call 734-254-9160 or visit www.handypro.com.

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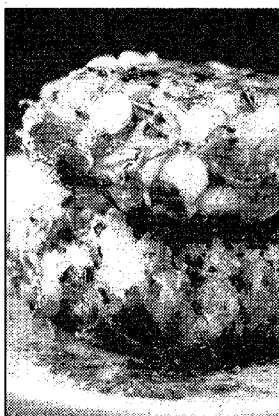
HAVE A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE NEW YEAR!

RECIPES

FROM PAGE D5

KERALAN CRAB CAKES

"Who doesn't love crab cakes? I know of no one. I made this recipe to meld a classic American dish with the hot and tangy flavors of my native Kerala... If you don't have the amchoor, don't despair. Add some lemon juice to the mixture instead."



Padma Lakshmi's Keralan Crab Cakes, flavored with serrano chilies and shredded coconut, are sure to be a hit at any soiree.

- 1 pound crab meat, shredded
 - 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
 - 1/2 cup flour
 - 8 serrano chilies, minced
 - 1 cup chopped chives
 - 1 cup shredded unsweetened coconut
 - 1/2 cup shredded carrot
 - 1/2 cup finely diced celery
 - 1 teaspoon amchoor (mango powder)
 - 1 cup sweet corn, fresh, canned or frozen, drained
 - 1 large egg, beaten
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 2 cups (approximately) canola oil, for frying
 - 1/4 cup milk
 - Fresh Mint Chutney
- Combine all the ingredients in a mixing bowl

except the oil, milk, and chutney.

Add the milk a bit at a time; you may need a bit more or less than 1/4 cup to adhere the ingredients into a thick cohesive mixture.

Form patties 3 inches in diameter and about 1 inch thick.

Fill a deep skillet with 1/2 inch of oil and place it over medium heat. Once the oil is hot and simmering (test for readiness by dropping a loose kernel of corn into it — if the oil sizzles and tiny bubbles form around the kernel, the oil is ready), gently fry the patties, turning them over to brown on each side. Do not crowd the pan, and use 2 spatulas to turn. Lay the fried patties on a few paper towels to absorb excess oil. Serve hot, with mint chutney on the side. Serves 6.

FRESH MINT CHUTNEY

"You will find a million uses for this simple dipping sauce, including whisking a bit into salad dressings and mixing it with yogurt for a thicker dip. It's best with anything fried. Even eggs get a grassy coat of glamour from this chutney."

- 2 1/2 cups fresh mint leaves
- 1 serrano or Thai chili
- 2 tablespoons fresh-squeezed lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- salt

Combine all the ingredients in a blender. A tablespoon of water or 2 can be added to help blend the ingredients, if needed. Pack the sauce in a jar, cover it with its lid, and store it in the refrigerator, where it will keep for 2-3 days. Makes about 3 cups. Source: "Tangy Tart Hot & Sweet: A World of Recipes for Every Day" by Padma Lakshmi

HEALDS

FROM PAGE D1

Two vineyards are located in the Asti region of Monferrato. They are named La Serra and Monte Colombo where di Gresy's Monferrato Rosso (merlot), Barbera d'Asti and Moscato d'Asti are grown.

WHAT TO BUY FROM MARCHESI DI GRESY

2005 Monte Aribaldo Dolcetto d'Alba \$17 is a young fresh red wine with violet and floral aromas and red berry and spice flavors. Grapes were grown at 1,200 feet elevation and vinified in stainless steel tanks.

Because the juice spent just a few days in contact with the skins, the wine shows little or no tannins and will easily

accompany a light New Year's lunch of antipasti, young cheeses and salami. Sounds like a good treat to eat during a New Year's Bowl Game!

Barberas from both Asti and Alba are wonderful, affordable wines to enjoy young. Barbera d'Asti 2005 \$18 boasts bright, fresh cherry and red berry aromas and flavors. It was vinified in stainless steel tanks and mature French oak barrels to yield an easy drinking and versatile red wine with the foods suggested above.

Martinenga Barbaresco 2003 \$42 was aged 18 months in French oak barrels and large Slovenian casks. "Aging in large oak casks brings back the vineyard character in the wine," said Jeff Chilcott, cellar master. Violets, dried fruits and fine tobacco highlight the aromas while the flavors include vanilla, roasted nuts

and dark berry fruits. "Pinot noir drinkers tend to appreciate barbaresco," Chilcott adds. This wine is especially good with fine aged cheese such as parmigiano-reggiano, alone or topping a bowl of hot pasta tossed with extra-virgin olive oil. La Serra Moscato d'Asti 2006 \$16 is the perfect wine to end a meal with fresh fruit or creme brulee. It shows a fresh, lightly sparkling texture with only 5.5 percent alcohol and 12 percent residual sugar. Honey, ripe pears and Fuji apples are dominant flavors. Recalling that "sweet beats heat," try it with Thai dishes.

The Healds are contributing editors for the internationally respected "Quarterly Review of Wines" and Troy residents who write about wine, spirits, and restaurants for the "Observer & Eccentric Newspapers." Contact them by e-mail at focusonwine@aol.com.

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Ⓢ ALIEN VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM (R)
11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
FRISAT LS 12:00
Ⓢ NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS (PG)
11:00, 12:30, 2:00, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:00, 9:30
FRISAT LS 11:45
Ⓢ CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR (R)
12:40, 2:55, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40
FRISAT LS 1:55
Ⓢ ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS (PG)
11:10, 1:20, 3:25, 5:35, 7:45, 9:55
FRISAT LS 12:00
Ⓢ I AM LEGEND (PG-13)
11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30
FRISAT LS 12:00
Ⓢ THE GOLDEN COMPASS (PG-13)
4:00, 9:10
FRISAT LS 11:40
ENCHANTED (PG)
11:15, 1:40, 6:45

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Dr. Karissa L. Jagacki
Licensed Michigan Audiologist

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Countdown to the New Year is here

Whether you're looking for a belly-laugh, a rock show or a more traditional New Year's night complete with champagne and dancing, we've got you covered. Here are the options to spend your final moments of 2007 in style:

the bosco lounge: Daniel Haberman, owner of the bosco, knows New Year's Eve is typically a time for celebration. But over the years prices for many parties have soared well above \$100 per ticket. Five years ago, the bosco, metro Detroit's critically-acclaimed high-end lounge, decided to get rid of the stress with the \$10 New Year's Eve Party. Much like with the \$100 parties, the \$10 New Year's



Eve Party features quality. Legendary Detroit DJ Brian Gillespie will spin funk, soul, hip hop and assorted jams. It will also feature the same favors as the high dollar parties: plastic hats and cardboard tiaras.

Tickets are available now for the 5th annual \$10 New Year's Eve Party by phone (248) 541-8818 or at the bosco. If capacity permits, tickets will also be sold at the door. 22930 Woodward Avenue, Ferndale.

Crud's New Year's Freak: Mudd Coffee and Blender Magazine presents Detroit's own Crud with guests Cybertrybe, The Geppetto Files, They Never Sleep, at The Magic Stick, 4140 Woodward Ave.,

Detroit. See Jimmy Doom as Baby New Year and don't miss burlesque by Death in Heels. DJ Topkat will spin between acts. Tickets \$20, call (313) 833-POOL or visit www.ticketmaster.com. Event is 18 and older.

Electric Six: There's no Detroit show quite like an Electric Six show. See what we mean 8 p.m. New Year's Eve at the Majestic Theatre, 4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets \$25 for this all ages show, call (313) 833-9700.

A Forbidden Broadway Christmas for New Year's Eve: The historic Gem Theatre and adjacent Century Grille have cooked up an impressive menu for dinner and a holiday show. The all-inclusive packages feature showtimes at 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. for \$110 and \$140 respectively. Show only tickets are also available. Call (313) 963-9800 to book your seat.

Four Tops: The legendary Four Tops, known the world over for their smooth, sophisticated sounds perform at the upscale Hotel St. Régis in Detroit. Appearing with the superstar performers are Les Williams & The Band and Tyrone Bradley. Stand By Me artist, Spyder Turner hosts the event and the Original Vandellas along with other former Motown artists will be in attendance as celebrity host. "Detroit is our home and performing in Detroit at the Hotel St. Regis on New Year's Eve is going to be really exciting," Four Top member Duke Fakir said. The December 31st concert marks the first New Years celebration for the historic Hotel St. Regis.



Crud is a can't miss option this New Year's Eve.

Detroit since it reopened in August, 2007 after an extensive multi-million dollar renovation and restoration. The six story structure located at 3071 West Boulevard in Detroit includes a ballroom, bar and lounge, a split-level dining room with a selection of over 200 wines, a private dining area and a posh, sophisticated Motown inspired Cajun steakhouse, La Musique which pays homage to many of Detroit's favorite musical legends including the Four Tops. Tickets per person are \$90 including champagne, \$150 with dinner (8-10 p.m.) or \$399 per couple for a

Please see **NEW YEAR'S EVE, E7**



The Four Tops perform New Year's Eve at the renovated St. Régis.

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Inside this week's

PURE ENTERTAINMENT
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Spike & Mike's sick animation festival returns to the Magic Bag

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NEWSPAPERS

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Cedric the Entertainer performs New Year's Eve at the Fox.



The School of Rock All-Stars will surprise even the pickiest lovers of rock.

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BY LANA MINI
STAFF WRITER

Filter often profiles local teenagers who know how to rock.

The School of Rock All-Stars elevates that concept with a 28-piece teen project, a rock snob's delight and rock 'n' roll at its fullest level. And "school" will be in session for a two-hour show Sunday, Dec. 30 at the new Crofoot in Pontiac.

School of Rock is the mastermind of an adult, but it's anything but contrived.

Paul Green, a real rock music lover from New York, played in bands throughout the 1980s and '90s and also worked as a music instructor. He realized the best way to teach music is put on shows, not recitals or fluffy pop rock gigs for the teen musicians who are members of the School of Rock.

Green has music schools all over the country and the hardest-working students, ages 13 to 17, have been chosen for the All-Star band. The concert is a Broadway-type show with 28 teenage musicians who alternate their time on stage

and perform cover songs that will surprise even the most cynical rock aficionado.

"They do a selection of classic rock, some big hits," Green said. "But I try to think of my rock snob friends when creating the list. If we do Led Zeppelin, we won't do *Heartbreaker*. . . we'll do *That's the Way*. "Then we'll do King Crimson (and Edgar Winter." And it gets even more serious.

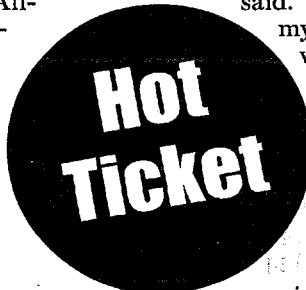
The show opens and closes with Pink Floyd's *Shine On You Crazy Diamond*.

They try to add light elements with songs like *Age of Aquarius* and *Thriller*.

If the name sounds familiar, it should. The School served as the apparent inspiration for the Jack Black hit comedy, *School of Rock*.

School of Rock currently has two touring bands, one based in Philadelphia and one in New York. The show in Pontiac features the New York kids.

"The New York kids are stronger in keyboards and drums so we do a lot of prog rock," Green said. "The Philly kids have a rock & soul



THE SCHOOL OF ROCK ALL-STARS

What: The best and hardest working teenagers from the east coast branches of the School of Rock music program that has performed with Alice Cooper, Eddie Vedder and Perry Farrell, and were the back-up band for Jon Anderson of Yes this year.

When: 7 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 30

Where: The Pike Room at The Crofoot, 1 S. Saginaw, Pontiac,

Tickets: \$10, all ages welcome, visit www.thecrofoot.com

Details on the Rochester school coming to: www.schoolofrock.com

sensibility so they do more Velvet Underground and some punk stuff.

"They even do Jane's Addiction's *Three Days* and *Summertime Rolls*."

That's requires serious skill.

The Pontiac show will also include songs by Frank Zappa.

"The audience is going to flip," Green said.

School of Rock has gained attention from big name musicians - including Perry Farrell of both Jane's Addiction and Satellite Party. In fact, Satellite Party's bass player Carl Restivo is a former

Please see **SCHOOL, E15**

It's time to get sick and twisted

BY LANA MINI
STAFF WRITER

It sells out every year and has become an annual event for the holidays here in metro Detroit.

It's not about jolly good cheer, it's all about being twisted. And, it's for adults.

The Spike And Mike Twisted Animation Festival opened yesterday and runs through Sunday, Dec. 30 at the Magic Bag in Ferndale.

This year the festival features 27 shorts.

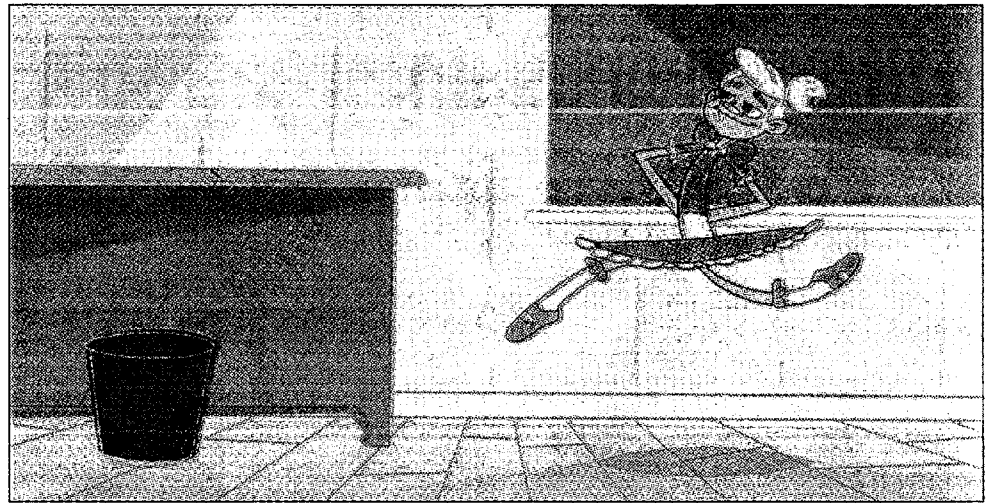
Here's a description of what's new:

Puppet: A hand puppet turns the table on his master by making him his dummy.

Ron the Zookeeper: The title character comes up with a new use for Viagra.

Rats on Cocaine: Pregnant: A chain-smoking rodent gives birth and wait till you see what she dines on in this candidate for the year's most sick-and-twisted short.

Happy Tree Friends: Everyone's favorite cartoon critters in vomit-inducing adventures.



You never know what you're going to see at Spike & Mike's animation festival.

The Magic Bag has been hosting the *Sick and Twisted Animation Festival* since 1992. The annual holiday screenings have included the Detroit premieres of Mike Judge (*Beavis and Butthead* in *Frog Baseball*), *South Park* creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker (*Frosty, The Spirit of Christmas*), *Powerpuff Girls* creator Craig McCracken (*No Neck Joe*), and the Oscar-nominated Don Hertzfeldt (*Rejected*).

The cartoons include a variety of styles from quirky hand drawings to elaborate computer generated productions.

Spike and Mike's is the longest running festival of its kind and plays a key role in progressing the animation medium into one of today's most popular facets of mass

SPIKE AND MIKE'S SICK AND TWISTED ANIMATION FESTIVAL

When: Doors open at 8 tonight with show-time at 9:30 p.m.; there's two showings each night on Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 7 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Tickets: \$8

Where: The Magic Bag, 22918 Woodward, Ferndale. Call (248) 544-3030.

adult entertainment.

George Lucas calls it "a fun and irreverent one-of-a-kind festival."

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Filter rewinds unforgettable moments from 2007



Taking a cue from Director Paul Thomas Anderson's film *Magnolia*, we know that we might be through with the past - but the past isn't through with us. And so the FILTER staff took a time out to reflect, rewind and remember the year in entertainment as viewed from our perch in Metro Detroit. Here are some moments we thought worthy of re-visiting:

On June 29 Apple released its much-hyped touch screen cell phone, iPod, camera, everything combo to mostly rave reviews. Techies everywhere wrote in to comment and question us about **iPhone** - the all-in-one device that plays movies, offers Internet access and scans YouTube with a touch of the finger.

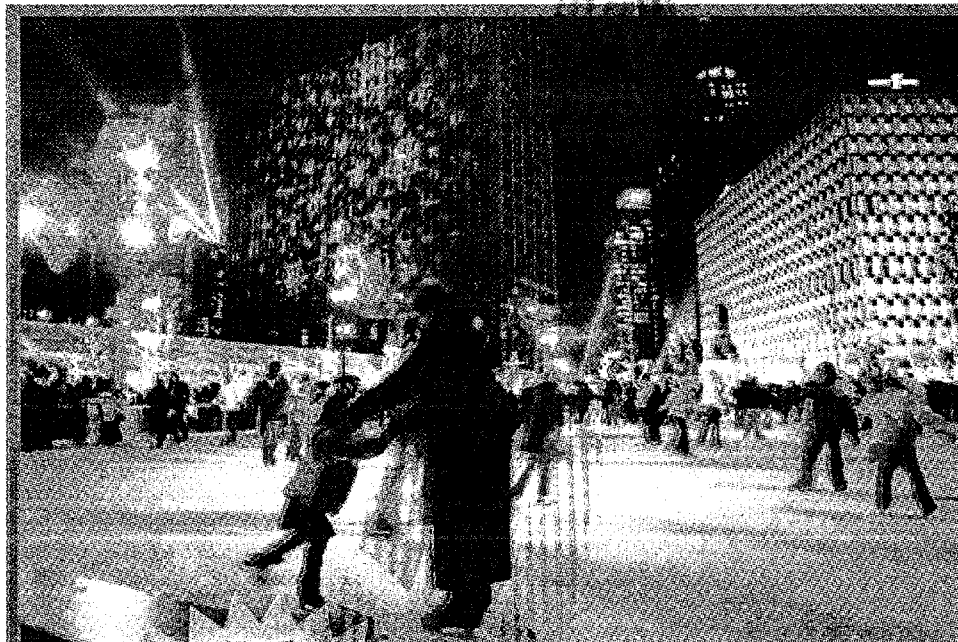
Leave the lights to Times Square, Detroit's own Fisher Theatre hosted direct-from-Broadway productions in 2007 including the hilarious romps *Sweet Charity* with Molly Ringwald, *Spamalot* and the *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, which featured Dana Steingold, a native of Bloomfield Hills.

In October David DiChiera, longtime

Please see **REWIND, E13**



Family portraits are highlighted in this gallery of 18th century British art at the newly renovated DIA.



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Let Cedric entertain you New Year's Eve

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Long before he earned the title of Original King of Comedy, Cedric The Entertainer was just Cedric Kyles from St. Louis.

Now the star of funny films like *Johnson Family Vacation* will head to Detroit to do what he does best - get audiences riled up - this New Year's Eve. "It's one of the comedy towns in the world," Cedric said, calling from his home in Los Angeles Dec. 18. The opportunity came up to perform his stand-up at the Fox Theatre and he couldn't turn it down. "We have a lot of fun in the city of Detroit," he said. "I am really looking forward to it."

Fans can expect Cedric will reflect on the year gone by while on stage for the final moments of 2007.

"You know comedy has always been around me," said Cedric. Growing up he was an avid fan of *The Jackie Gleason Show*, Flip Wilson and Richard Pryor. "I've been influenced by them," he said. He even had a chance to re-envision a role made famous by Gleason - that of Ralph Kramden in *The Honeymooners*.

Cedric said he's always been a sort of storyteller, a funny kid but it wasn't until he saw Robin Harris, creator of *Bebe's Kids*, that he ever considered comedy as a career. "He was from Chicago," he said. "He had a style that he didn't come up like a superstar. He seemed like someone you know."

Though he's a fan of Eddie Murphy, that was about the time Cedric realized you "didn't have to wear leather suits" to make it in comedy. "I could actually do it myself."

In high school and college he performed in school plays and talent shows, but considered himself as a singer. The first time he tried stand up was in a competition setting. "I told one of my jokes to my mother and she went all the way to the ground," he said. That gave him the confidence to enter the contest - and on that first try he won first prize, \$500.

From there the story is rather well known. Cedric starred alongside Steve Harvey on *The Steve Harvey Show*, which ran for six seasons and admittedly "opened up the doors." He served as a performer and then hosted *Def Comedy Jam*, hosted his own show *Cedric The Entertainer Presents* and moved on to do films like *Barbershop*, *Be Cool* and recently, *Talk To Me*. He's lent his unmistakable voice to animated shows as Bobby Proud on *The Proud Family* and in *Charlotte's Web* as Golly the Goose. Cedric calls the film and television move "a natural part of the evolution of stand up."

CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER

Who: You've seen him in "Barbershop" now see Cedric The Entertainer perform live with openers DeRay Davis, Luenell Campbell and JJ.

When: Doors open 9 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31.

Where: The Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit.

Tickets: \$65.60, \$74.50 and \$99.50 in advance. Day of show tickets cost \$5 more, call (248) 433-1515.

Cover
Story

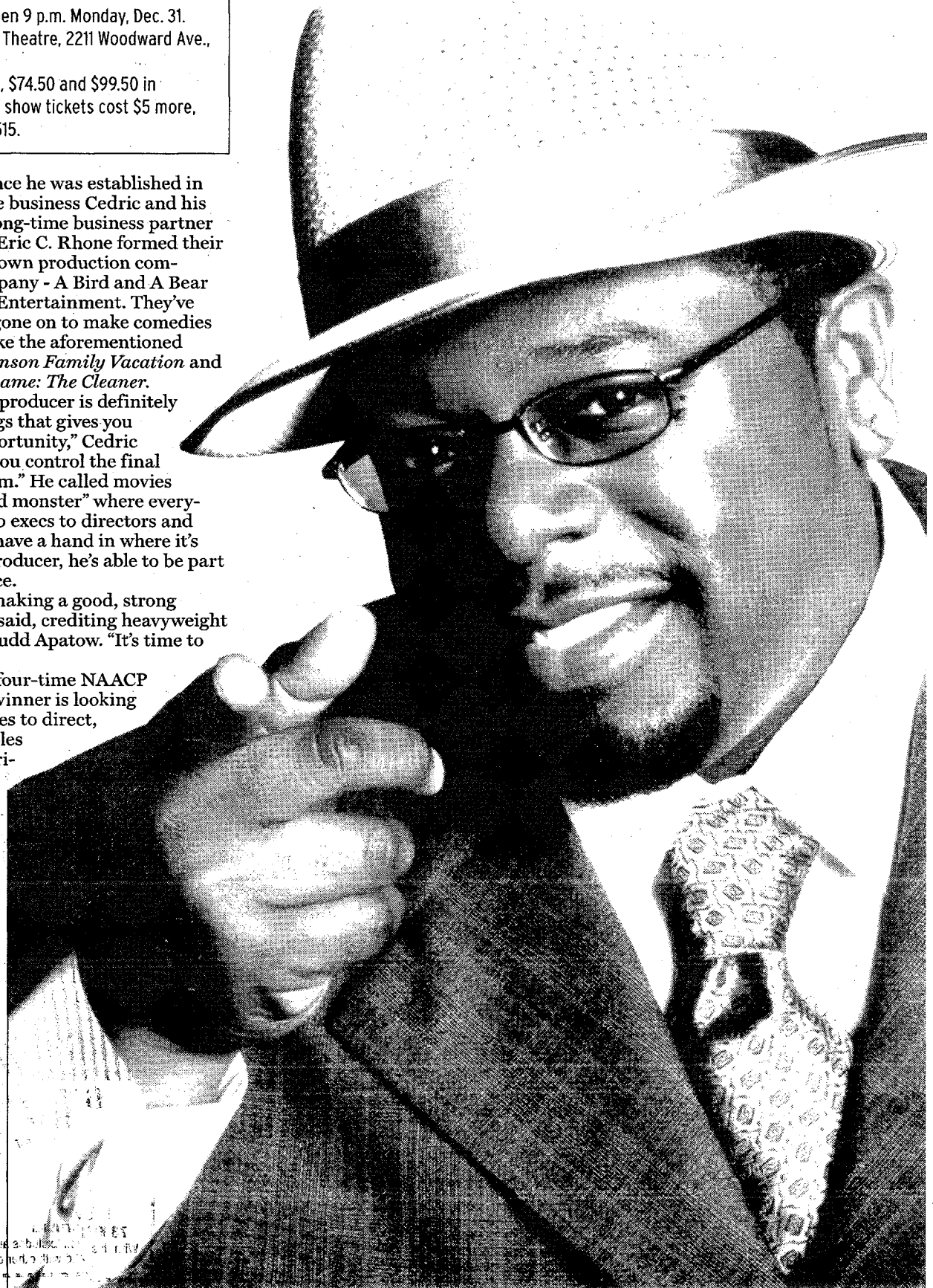
Once he was established in the business Cedric and his long-time business partner Eric C. Rhone formed their own production company - *A Bird and A Bear Entertainment*. They've gone on to make comedies like the aforementioned *Johnson Family Vacation* and *Codename: The Cleaner*.

"Being a producer is definitely one of the things that gives you power and opportunity," Cedric said. "It helps you control the final result of the film." He called movies a "multi-headed monster" where everyone from studio execs to directors and cast members have a hand in where it's headed. As a producer, he's able to be part of that influence.

"Comedy is making a good, strong comeback," he said, crediting heavyweight directors like Judd Apatow. "It's time to laugh."

For now the four-time NAACP Image Award winner is looking for opportunities to direct, and to act in roles with a more serious, dramatic flare. He's balancing comedic roles in upcoming films like *Welcome Home Roscoe Jenkins* with crime dramas like *The Night Watchman*.

Cedric hopes the crowds come out on New Year's Eve in Detroit, and he asks "if they could, just not make it so cold. Just turn the temperature up 5 or 6 degrees."



NEW YEAR'S EVE

FROM PAGE E2

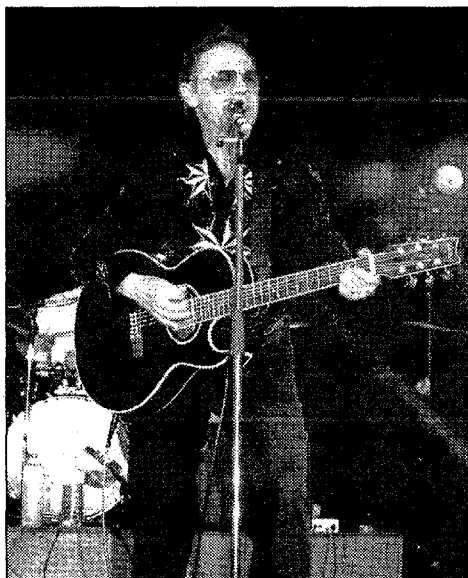
complete package including concert, dinner, champagne, luxurious hotel room and a full breakfast the following day. For more information call the Hotel St. Regis Detroit at (313) 873-3000.

Johnny Powers: The Rockabilly legend headlines with his band Nobody's Business and opens the Widowmakers, Kenny Kens & the Cash Creek Band, 7 p.m. at the Painted Lady, 2930 Jacob St., Hamtramck. Tickets \$15, call (313) 874-2991

New Year's Nation: Celebrate with a global broadcast, red carpet treatment, a five-hour premium open bar, hors d'oeuvres and a midnight buffet, champagne toast and balloon drop. It starts at 8 p.m. at the Fillmore-Detroit, 2115 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Tickets cost \$100-\$250 with proceeds benefitting the Michael J. Fox Foundation, call (248) 543-1000 or visit www.newyearsnation.com.

Nouveau: Celebrate the Crave way with a five-course dinner, baby Cristal champagne, DJs Chilly and Dio and The Bongos with discounted rooms at the Ritz-Carlton available, at Crave, 22075 Michigan Ave., Dearborn. Tickets range from \$40 to \$90 with early and late dinner options. Call (313) 492-2000.

Stewart: See Hamtramck Musician Danny D perform songs by Rod Stewart. He'll be joined by fellow impersonators portraying Neil Diamond, the Blues Brothers and there will be a DJ to ensure a night of non-stop music. It comes complete with a full buffet dinner, dessert table, open bar, New Year's toast and party favors. Doors open at 8 p.m. at



Johnny Powers

the Wayne Ford Civic Center, 1645 N. Wayne Road, Westland. Tickets \$50-\$85, call (734) 782-5010.

Tryst: This New Year's Eve gala includes a singles reception, premium open bar, lavish hors d'oeuvres, a champagne toast and balloon drop, with music by Good Gravy, all at the Townsend Hotel, Birmingham. Tickets \$145, call (248) 543-1000.

Tribute in Farmington Hills: Dinner reservations accepted from 5:30 p.m. through 9:30 p.m. A full a la carte menu and the Chefs' Tasting menu will be prepared by new executive chef Rich Travis. Tribute is located at 31425 Twelve Mile Road, west of

Orchard Lake Road in Farmington Hills. Phone (248) 848-9393. Reservations are recommended.

Forte in Birmingham: You can choose an early dinner, prime time seating or join in on the New Year's Eve party. A limited menu with three seatings at 4:30, 6:30 and 9 p.m. with reservations confirmed with a \$20 deposit. Early seating from 4:30 until 6:30 p.m. is \$40 per person and includes soup or salad, choice of selected entrees and chef's dessert sampler. Alcoholic beverages, taxes and gratuity are additional. Prime time seating is \$65 per person and includes all of the above plus an appetizer platter for the table. Party time seating from 9 p.m. until you ring in the New Year is \$100 per person which includes dinner, live music and dancing to a full piece band called Hidden Agenda, party favors, Champagne Toast at Midnight and a "slider buffet" at 1 a.m. Entrée choices will include filet, whitefish, salmon, shrimp and lobster pasta, short ribs, chicken picatta, and surf & turf. Forte is located at 201 S. Old Woodward in downtown Birmingham. Phone (248) 594-7300.



Laugh in the new year with "A Forbidden Broadway Christmas" at the Gem Theatre in Detroit.

Capt'n20, Prevu & Blake George. Valet & coat check available. Cocktail chic attire is suggested. VIP guests receive gift bags from contributing sponsors. Cost for the event is \$100 per person. For reservations, call 1-866-396-3115. The Diamond Center inside The Rock Financial Showplace is located at 41600 Grand River Avenue in Novi.

The Diamond Center inside the Rock Financial Showplace in Novi: Epoch Events Catering will host a party featuring a premium open bar, ball drop on large video screen, complimentary hors d'oeuvres and various buffets served 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. Live Entertainment with Steve King & the Dittlies playing music from the 80's & 90's, DJ's

Please see **NEW YEAR'S EVE, E13**

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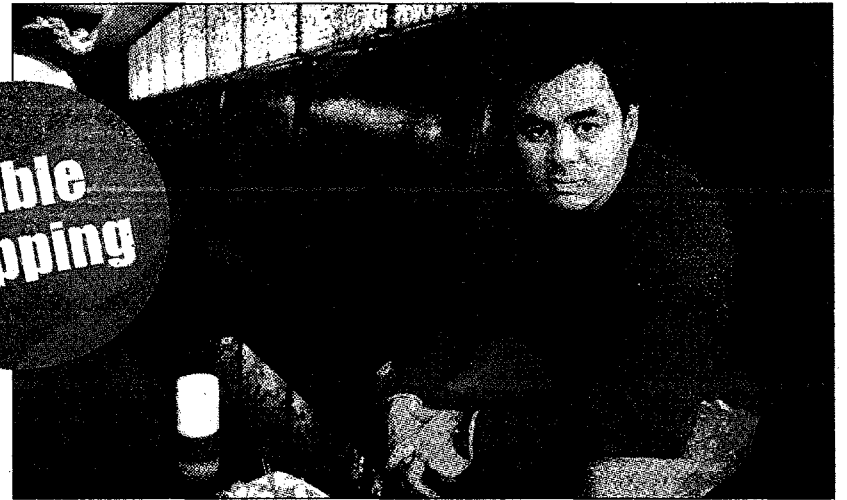
Usher in the New Year with Asian flair at Chen Chow

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
STAFF WRITER

Birmingham's latest culinary addition, Chen Chow Brasserie, brings with it an Asian-inspired menu and an elegant setting that's quite suitable for ringing in the new year.

The restaurant, with its warm earthy tones, circular seating areas and eye-catching decor, is credited to internationally-known designer John Janviriya of West Bloomfield. Fans of Dearborn's Crave and Ann Arbor's Melange will find his latest project just as impressive.

It's taken about a year to bring Chen Chow to downtown Birmingham, and Janviriya noted the location in the Palladium building found him. "We knew the concept would work," he said. "There was no high-end Asian restaurant."



PHOTOS BY LAWRENCE MCKEE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

John Janviriya owns Chen Chow in Birmingham.

Chef Sam Ness crafted Chen Chow's mouth-watering menu. According to Janviriya, he had "100 percent creative liberty." The result balances a wide array of sushi rolls and sashimi with generous seafood, chicken and steak

entrees. "The sushi is excellent," he said. "The quality of the fish is what that comes down to."

Diners might choose to begin a festive dinner with Tuna Tartar or

Please see **CHEN CHOW, E9**



Chilean Sea Bass (foreground) is marinated in special Asian herbs and spices, soy and citrus infused, grilled and served with Asian vegetables and rice.

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CHEN CHOW

FROM PAGE E8

Miso Soup and then move onto something more substantial. The Lobster Salad is accented by egg, apple, avocado and lemon lime dressing. The Chilean Sea Bass, recommended by Janviriya, is marinated in Asian herbs and spices, and soy and citrus sauces. The 10-ounce Filet Mignon is char-grilled and served alongside wasabi mashed potatoes.

When it comes to sushi, popular choices include the house specialty maki roll, the Chen Chow, which is topped with tuna tempura crunch, or the Philly Maki with smoked salmon, avocado and cream cheese. The Sashimi platter contains 16 pieces, each delicately arranged like flowers on the plate.

Plymouth resident Joseph McGlenn stopped by the restaurant on Dec. 11 seeking a job. He said he was drawn to the restaurant for its "interesting, eclectic Asian-Fusion menu."

Just three weeks since the Chen Chow opened its doors, Janviriya said business is going good. The restaurant's name was derived from Janviriya's - "Chen is the Chinese version of my last name," he said, referring to the first syllable of his last name.

The stunning setting at Chen Chow offers something for everyone. Enter off of Old Woodward and you'll see a contrasting black and white interior surrounding a white onyx bar. Follow through either of the circular

CHEN CHOW BRASSERIE

260 N. Old Woodward, Birmingham
(248) 594-CHOW (2469) or www.chenchow.com

Hours: 5-11 p.m., Sunday-Tuesday; 5 p.m. to 2 a.m. Wednesday-Saturday

Menu: Appetizers run \$5 to \$30; sushi is \$5 and up; and entrées run \$28 to \$40.

archways beyond the wine cellar and you'll be seated in style in a high-backed pod-like booth or at a simply-styled table on the raised dining platform. For a quick bite of sushi, the bar is available in the back of the room. Janviriya noted it was a challenge to come up with a design for the restaurant that would have its own feel, without looking too similar to spaces he's designed in the past. Chen Chow lends itself to an intimate dinner for two or a large party, depending on your choice of seating.

After 10 p.m. the crowds fill into the bar area, Janviriya said. And they choose from an intriguing drink menu developed by Rico Miller. Miller, formerly of Nomi in Northville, recommended the Lychee martini, or for a pick-me-up the Boomtini, topped with C-Force energy drink.

With a musical playlist set by some of the area's foremost DJs, including Mike Anthony, Chen Chow boasts plenty of atmosphere. It's the sort of place you have to see and experience for yourself.

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Baby Loves Disco comes to Detroit

Adults will be dancing the night away on New Year's Eve. But in 2008 toddlers will take over the floor as Baby Loves Disco, a national family dance party phenomenon, comes to Detroit.

Led by host moms Robyn Dwoskin and Julie Hirsch, Baby Loves Disco will transform Eden Nightclub into a child-proof dance party from 1-4 p.m. Feb. 16 and March 15.

More than 600 toddlers, preschoolers and parents looking for a break from the playground circuit are expected to let loose for some post nap-time, pre-dinner fun.

Make no mistake, this is not the land of licensed characters and sing-song music.


Baby Loves Disco features real music guaranteed to get those little booties moving and grooving. DJ Ryan Richards will spin classic disco tunes from the '70s

and '80s, and the fun continues with bubble machines, baskets of instruments, giveaways, and a chill-out room with tents, books and puzzles. Healthy snacks and juices will be on hand for kids, and yes, the bar will be open for mommy and daddy.

According to organizers, one hour of dancing is all most children can handle, and diaper changing stations are provided. At its core, Baby Loves Disco is a community event designed to bring kids and parents together. It's guaranteed to be the best time you've had at a kids event.

Baby Loves Disco is now in more than 20 U.S. cities, and recently launched in the U.K. (London and Manchester).

Eden Nightclub is located at 22061 Woodward Ave., in Ferndale. Tickets for Baby Loves Disco are \$12 per walking human. Visit www.babylovesdisco.com.



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ART EXHIBITS

Cranbrook Art Museum: "Eero Saarinen: Shaping the Future," North American premiere of Saarinen's work at Cranbrook, and collection of furniture, photographs, drawings and models, through March 30, \$10 adults; \$5 teens and full-time students with ID; children 12 and under are admitted free with adult admission, 39221 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, call (877) 60-CRANBROOK (1-877-462-7262) or visit www.cranbrook.edu.

Flint Institute of Arts: "Art of Collecting" exhibition, through Dec. 30, more than 200 paintings, prints, drawings and sculptures on consignment from galleries in Detroit, Chicago and New York, \$7 for regular museum admission, 1120 E. Kearsley, Flint (810) 234-1695.

Henry Ford Centennial Library: "Eclectic Endeavors," 43 pieces of watercolors and life drawings of Barbara Eko Murphy, through Jan. 26, 16301 Michigan Ave., Dearborn (313) 943-2330.

MOCAD: "Words Fail Me," exhibit with messages in different forms, curated by Matthew Higgs, through Jan. 20, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit, (313) 832-6622, www.mocadetroit.org.

Oakland University: "Image & Text," OU Biennial Faculty Exhibition, opening reception, 6-8 p.m. Jan. 12, through Feb. 24, artists' panel 6 p.m. Jan. 29, 208 Wilson Hall, Rochester, www.oakland.edu/ouag, (248) 370-3005.

Southfield Public Library: Early American Toys, Tower Lobby; Witness for the Nameless, photography and poetry by Edna Garte and Norman Dubin, Bookends Cafe; Holiday Magic, collection of holiday-themed dolls from the collection of Alan Toubeaux, WOW Wall, First Level; South Africa, photography by David Doolittle, Second Level, Gallery Wall; Glass Display, Third Level; writers' display, Third Level, Southfield Municipal Complex, 26300 Evergreen, www.sfldlib.org, (248) 796-4224.

ART GALLERIES

Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center: "Art & Artifact," "Black and White Drawings," artwork by Emily Pelton and BBAC students, opening night reception 6-8 p.m. Jan. 11, exhibitions run Jan. 11-Feb. 1, 1516 Cranbrook (between 14 and 15 Mile roads), Birmingham www.BBArtCenter.org, (248) 644-0866.

@POP Gallery: "Six Artists in the Tradition of Art School of the Detroit Society of Arts and Crafts," exhibit through Dec. 31, 4160 Woodward Ave., Detroit, myspace.com/cpopgallery.

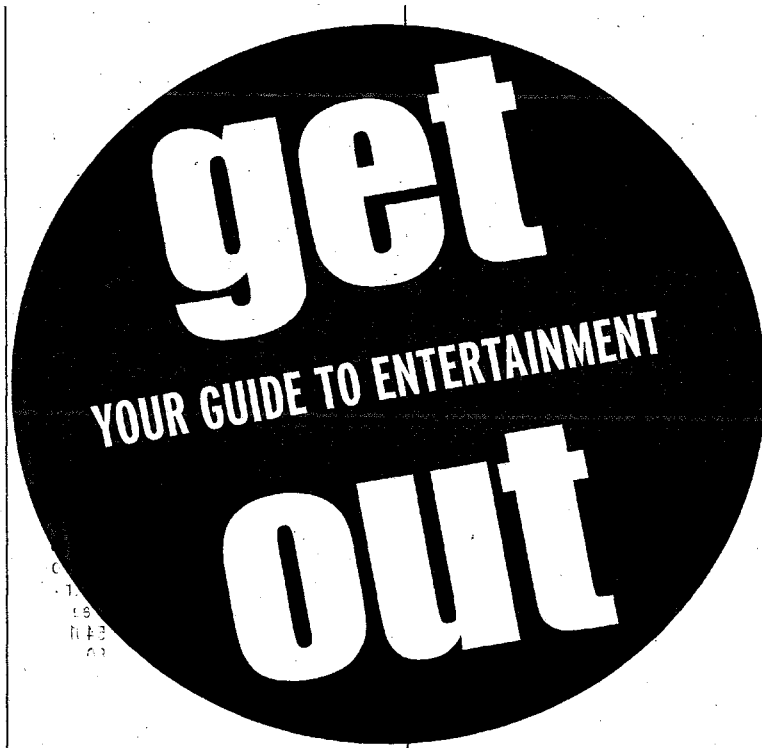
D & M Art Studios: "Surviving Deployment," portraits by Erin Dillenbeck, many of her fiance Ryan Keese, is on active duty in Iraq, through Dec. 31, 8691 N. Lilley, Canton (734) 453-3710.

Farmington Hills City Gallery: "Remembrance," a mixed media collection by Carolynne Miller, through Jan. 31, Costick Center, 28600 11 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, (248) 473-1856.

Hilberly Gallery: "50/50 Paintings" by Ivin Ballen, exhibit through Jan. 5, 700 Livernois, Ferndale (248) 541-4700.

Hill Gallery: Dennis Oppenheim, through Jan. 12, 407 W. Brown, Birmingham, (248) 540-9288.

Lawrence Street Gallery: "Little Things Mean a Lot," through Dec. 28; 22620 Woodward, Ferndale (248) 544-0394, www.lawrences-treetgallery.com.



Lawrence Street Gallery: "Contrasts," Susan Hershberg/Aldelman, Jan. 9-Feb. 2, opening reception 6-9 p.m. Jan. 11, 22620 Woodward (east side of Woodward, two blocks south of 9 Mile), Ferndale (248) 544-0394, www.lawrences-treetgallery.com.

Lemberg Gallery: "Thinking in Color," through Jan. 5, 23241 Woodward, Ferndale (248) 591-6623, www.lembregallery.com.

Paul Kotula Projects: Iris Eichenberg's "Elizabeth," through Jan. 5, 23255 Woodward, Ferndale (248) 544-3020.

Paint Creek Center for the Arts: "Object, Inc.," group show with nine Michigan artists, 407 Pine, Rochester, (248) 651-4110, www.pccart.org.

The Print Gallery: Joyce Lieberman, oil paintings, through Jan. 18, 29173 Northwestern Hwy., Southfield www.EverythingArt.com, (248) 356-5454.

Sherry Washington Gallery: David Fludd, "New Paintings and Drawings," through Dec. 31, www.sherrywashingtongallery.com, (313) 961-4500.

ART, ETC.

Detroit Institute of Arts: Guided tours in January, 1 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays; 1, 6 and 7:30 p.m. Fridays, 1 and 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, (313) 833-7971 for membership information.

BALLET

Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts: St. Petersburg Ballet of Russia (Jacobson's Ballet), 8 p.m. Jan. 10-11, \$30-\$50 (buy one get one free), Ticketmaster.com, 350 Madison, Detroit, (313) 887-8500, www.musichall.org.

BOOKS

Womenscenter Book Group: Eight session book group for women, begins Jan. 9, meets on alternate Wednesdays at 1 p.m. in Womenscenter in Room 309 of J Building, participants are asked to read "The Unknown Errors of Our Lives" by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, \$12, Orchard Ridge campus at Oakland Community College, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, just south of I-696, Farmington Hills (248) 522-3642.

CHORAL

University Musical Society: Bach's St. Matthew Passion with Detroit Symphony Orchestra, UMS Choral Union, Michigan State University Children's Choir, March 21; call for brochure at (734) 764-2538 or visit www.ums.org.

Farmington Hills Youth Choir: Auditions for choir, 5 p.m. Jan. 16, Longacre House, Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile roads, call (248) 473-1859 for information.

Metropolitan Singers: sing old and new songs, practice each Monday at Birney School in Southfield, call (248) 548-6652 for information.

CLASSICAL

Detroit Symphony Orchestra: "A Summer's Dream," Jan. 4-6; "Ehnes Plays Barber," Jan. 10, 12-13; "Fantastique Dutoit," Jan. 24-26, Max Fisher Music Center, Detroit. Visit www.detroitstringsymphony.com.

Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings: "Trios and More," the combination of clarinet (Laurence Liberson), horn (Karl Pituch) and piano (Robert Conway), reception 8 p.m., performance at 8:30 p.m. Jan. 11, \$20 adults advance tickets, \$10 students, tickets \$5 more at door, Hagopian World of Rugs, 850 S. Old Woodward, Birmingham (248) 559-2095, www.detroitchamberwinds.org.

Plymouth Canton Symphony: Symphony Society's Youth Artist Competition, application deadline Jan. 21 for Feb. 3 competition at Evola Music, 7170 Haggerty, Canton, three divisions of senior instrumental and senior piano (grades 10-12) and junior combined (grades 7-9), must reside in Clarenceville, Livonia, Northville, Novi, Plymouth-Canton or Wayne-Westland, winners get scholarships, for information, visit www.plymouthsymphony.org or call (734) 451-2112.

Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra: Young Artists String Competition, auditions 4-9 p.m. Jan. 8-10, Wilson Viols, 725 S. Adams, Birmingham, application deadline is Dec. 31, download applications at www.bbs.o.org.

Plymouth Symphony Orchestra: "Blissful Baroque," Jan. 19, Village Theater at Cherry Hill, Canton. With this mid-winter program, favorite tunes from George Fredrick Handel will be in abundance.

CLUBS

The Blind Pig: The VonBondies with Freer, Jan. 9, 208 S. First St. Ann Arbor. (734) 996-8555.

Bosco: Enjoy noWax nights at 7 p.m. every Wednesday, no cover, 21 and over only, 22930 Woodward in Ferndale, www.the-bosco.com, (248) 541-8818.

Eden Nightclub & Ultralounge: Friday night party with DJ Ryan Richards, 10 p.m. guest celebrity hosts and DJs; DJ Urban Chris in the Garden Room, DJ Pannos in the Ultralounge accompanied by percussionist Jared Sykes, 10 p.m. Saturday, 22061 Woodward Ave, Ferndale (248) 541-7674. **Edison's:** Rick Stel Project, Dec. 27; The Randy Brock Group, Dec. 28-29; The Snakes, Dec. 31; Larry Lee, Jan. 3; Robert Penn, Jan. 4-5; The Blue Kings, Jan. 10; bugs Beddow Band, Jan. 11-12; Mystery Train featuring Jim McCarty, Jan. 17; Aaron Vaughn Band, Jan. 18-19; The Randy Brock Group, Jan. 24; Bazooka Charlie, Jan. 25-26; John D. Lamb Band, Jan. 31; 220 Merrill, Birmingham (248) 645-2150.

Ginopolis on the Grill: Don Swindell and Shuffle Play, with Swindell, Sheila Brown, Mike Lorenz and Jake Reichhart, 7:30-11:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 27851 Middlebelt at 12 Mile in Farmington Hills, no cover, (248) 851-8222.

The Magic Bag: Anti-Freeze Blues Festival featuring The Hodge Brothers Reunion, The Erich Goebel Band, The Grandmasters and Mike Espy/Yakety Yak, Jan. 4 and Bettye Lavette, Johnnie Bassett, The Laith Al Saadi Band, Count Bracey & The Pleasuretones and The Front Street Blues Band, Jan. 5, \$25 each night, 22920 Woodward Ave., Detroit. (248) 544-3030. **O-Zen Lounge:** Formerly the Buddha Lounge; Hot 'N Ready with DJ U.N.I., hip hop soul, Thursday; Insomnia Music, hip hop, soul, old school, Friday; Super Sonic Smooth Music with DJ Shug, Saturday; karaoke with Chez, Sunday; '80s and Rock N Roll; bring your CDs, Tuesday; and Energetic House with DJ Tony Bell, Wednesday; www.ozenlounge.com, 21633 W. Eight Mile, Detroit (313) 535-4664.

Sky Club: Tango, salsa, and Latin dancing every Wednesday beginning at 8 p.m., located above Sangria's Restaurant, 401 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak, (248) 543-1964.

COMEDY

Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase: Jim Wiggins, Dec. 27-29; Cash Levy, Dec. 31; J.R. Remick, Jan. 3-5; Ty Barnett, Jan. 10-12; Artie Fletcher, Jan. 17-19; Chilli Challis, Jan. 24-26; Brian Kiley, Jan. 31, Feb. 1-2; 314 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor (734) 996-9080, www.aacomedy.com.

City Theatre: Earthquake, Dec. 28-30, \$32.50, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit, (248) 645-6666.

Fox Theatre: Cedric the Entertainer, Dec. 31; Chris Rock, Feb. 29, 2211 Woodward, Detroit, \$65.50-\$99.50, Ticketmaster.com (248) 433-1515.

Historic Holly Hotel Comedy Club: Chrissy Burns, Dec. 28-31; Dean Mink, Jan. 4-5; Kevin Naughton, Jan. 11-12; Keith McGill, Jan. 18-19; Gary George, Jan. 25-26; 110 Battle Alley, Holly (248) 634-5208.

JD's House of Comedy: Stand-up shows, 8 p.m. Thursday and 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday; Apollo amateur night, 8 p.m. Wednesday; 25333 W. 12 Mile, inside Star Theatre complex, Southfield, (248) 348-2420 or www.ticketmaster.com.

Maxie's Sunday Night Comedy Shoppe: Chrissy Burns, Dec. 30; Steve Bills, Jan. 6; Kevin Naughton, Jan. 13; Keith McGill, Jan. 20; Gary George, Jan. 27; 2500 W. Hill Rd. (just west of U.S. 23), Flint (810) 232-2500.

Michigan Theatre: Bob Saget, 8 p.m. April 19, mature audiences, \$29.50-\$39.50, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. (248) 645-6666.

City Theatre: Earthquake (Dec. 27-30), Ticketmaster.com, (248) 433-1515.

The Second City: The Best of Second City-Detroit, on Sundays, (Mondays and Tuesdays for group booking); The Second City's Dysfunctional Holiday Revue, shows

throughout November and December, 42705 Grand River Avenue in Novi, (248) 348-4448, www.secondcity.com.

CONCERTS

The Fillmore-Detroit: Omarion with Ja Rule and Trey Songz, Dec. 30; G Love and Special Sauce, Jan. 18; Lenny Kravitz, Jan. 27; The Green 17 Tour with Flogging Molly, Feb. 9; Angels and Airwaves with Meg and Dia, The Color Fred, Ace Enders, Feb. 23; Jann Arden, Feb. 26, 2115 Woodward, Detroit. Call (248) 645-6666.

The Fox Theatre: B.B. King, Feb. 16; Jill Scott, March 21, 2211 Woodward, Detroit, Ticketmaster.com (248) 433-1515.

Joe Louis Arena: Kid Rock, Feb. 8-9; Linkin Park with Coheed and Cambria, Feb. 16; Foo Fighters, Feb. 24, (248) 645-6666, www.ticketmaster.com, OlympiaEntertainment.com.

The Palace: Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Dec. 26; The Doodlebops Live, Jan. 20; Matchbox Twenty with Alanis Morissette and MUTEMATH, 6:30 p.m. Feb. 2; The Spice Girls, Feb. 16; Bon Jovi with Daughtry, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 20; Avril Lavigne with Boys Like Girls, March 22, (248) 645-6666 or Palacenet.com.

Masonic Temple Theatre: 500 Temple Ave., Detroit. (248) 645-6666.

Michigan Theatre: James Blunt, 7:30 p.m. Feb. 23, 603 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor. (248) 645-6666.

Ford Community & Performing Arts Center: A Valentine's Rock 'N' Roll Spectacular with Sonny Turner (former lead singer of the Platters), The Vogues, The Diamonds, The Reflections, Jack Scott, Lou Christie, Bill Haley's Original Comets, Little Peggy March, The Marcels, 5 and 8 p.m. Feb. 16, \$27-\$67, 15801 Michigan, Dearborn (313) 943-2354 Ext. 1.

St. Andrews Hall: The Hard Lessons with The Muggs, Great Lakes Myth Society, Dec. 26; Rusted Root, 8 p.m. Dec. 29; Necro with Psycho-Realm and Danny Diablo, Jan. 11; The Mars Volta, Jan. 23; The Editors, Jan. 26; Matt Nathanson, Feb. 5; 431 E. Congress, Detroit, (248) 645-6666.

DANCE

Detroit Dance Collective: Collage Concert, Jan. 12-13, Ford Community & Performing Arts Center, 15801 Michigan Avenue, Dearborn, \$12-\$45, (734)259-9659.

Eisenhower Dance Ensemble: EDE Center for Dance opens at new location in January at 103 South Street in Rochester, open house, noon-4 p.m. Jan. 12; parent recognition night at 6 p.m. that evening, dancers perform at 2 p.m., \$15 registration will be waived to those who register for dance classes that day, classes offered are Mom & Tot, Creative Movement, Pre-Ballet, Ballet, Pointe, Pre-Pointe, Modern, Jazz, Hip-Hop, Tap, Social Dance, Boys classes and Tone & Stretch, (248) 852-8850, www.ede-dance.org.

Eisenhower Dance Ensemble: NewDanceFest VI, 7:30 p.m. Jan. 26; Bright Side of the Road, 8 p.m. April 5, various locations, call (248) 852-5850 or see www.ede-dance.org.

Joe Louis Arena: Dancing With the Stars Tour, Jan. 5, Detroit, \$52.50-\$168, (248) 645-6666.

Oakland Community College: Happendance, Jan. 18, Orchard Ridge Campus, on Orchard Lake Road, just south of I-696, Farmington Hills, (248) 341-2270, www.oaklandcc.edu/entertainment.

Detroit Opera House: African Footprint, Jan. 19-20, 1526 Broadway, Detroit \$15-\$75, (313) 237-SING, www.MichiganOpera.org.

FAMILY

Fox Theatre: Sesame Street Live presents "Elmo Makes Music," Jan. 25-Feb. 10, Tickets \$12-\$32, 2211 Woodward, Detroit, Ticketmaster.com (248) 433-1515.

The Palace of Auburn Hills: Disney On Ice Presents: High School Musical The Ice Tour, Feb. 29-March 2, Palacenet.com, The Palace Box Office and all Ticketmaster centers, (248) 377-0100.

Outdoorama: Feb. 28-March 2, Rock Financial Showplace, 46100 Grand River, Novi, \$9 adults, \$4 children 6-14, www.Outdoorama.com, (800) 328-6550.

Ultimate Fishing Show: Jan. 10-13, Rock Financial Showplace, 46100 Grand River, Novi \$9 adults, \$4 children 6-14, www.UltimateFishingShow.com, (800) 328-6550.

FOOD & WINE

Rock 'n' Roll Wine Tasting: Amplified wine tasting, wines paired with live music by alternative pop rocker Carolyn Striho, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Jan. 17, \$30 advance, \$35 at door. Grape Expectations Wine Bar & Merchant, 555 Forest, Plymouth, 1-866-381-1763, www.rocknrollwine.com.

HOLIDAY SHOWS

Holiday Blues Showcase: Pete "Big Dog" Feters, Motor City Josh with Stacia Petrie, the Matt Besey Band and bugs beddow with the Skye Island Band, 8 p.m. Dec. 26, Memphis Smoke, 100 S. Main, Royal Oak, (248) 543-4300. \$5 donation suggested, proceeds benefit the Motor City Music Foundation.

The Fox Theatre: Cedric the Entertainer, 9 p.m. Dec. 31, OlympiaEntertainment.com, the Fox Theatre and Joe Louis Arena box offices, Hockeytown Authentics in Troy (without service charge) and at all Ticketmaster locations, including Macy's and Ticketmaster.com. To charge tickets by phone, call (248) 433-1515.

Rochester: Big, Bright Light Show every night through Dec. 31, Main Street north of Avon Road, www.DowntownRochesterMI.com.

JAZZ

Baker's Keyboard Lounge: Spencer Barfield & Friends with Don Mayberry (bass) and Djallo Djakate (drums), Wednesdays, 20510 Livernois (at Eight Mile), Detroit (313) 345-6300.

Cliff Bells: Scott Gwinell and his 16-piece jazz orchestra, 9:30 p.m. every Wednesday, 2030 Park (near Comerica Park), Detroit (313) 961-2543.

Gala Bistro: Meri Slaven Trio, 8 p.m. Dec. 31, 33316 Grand River, Farmington (248) 478-2355.

Kwanzaa Jazz Concert: Barry Harris Trio, 7 p.m. Dec. 29, First Unitarian Universalist Church, 4605 Cass (at Forest), Detroit, \$25 donation, \$5 child under 12, includes afterglow, (313) 833-9107.

Mario's of Troy: Expedition, Jan. 11, 1477 John R just south of Maple, Troy (248) 588-6000.

Pi Restaurant: Sheila Landis, Dec. 28-29; 28875 Franklin (southwest corner of 12 Mile and Northwestern Hwy.), Southfield (248) 208-7500, www.piosouthfield.com.

Detroit Windsor Jazz Club: Saturdays at Shield's (1-4 p.m.), Chuck Moss and the Paint Creek Jazz Band, Jan. 5; Ray Heitger and the Cakewalkin' Jazz Band, Jan. 19; Kerry Price and Friends, Feb. 2; Rick Bryant, Feb. 16; \$10 cover, 25101 Telegraph, Southfield (248) 356-2720.

MORE MUSIC

AJ's Cafe: Alex Winston, Dec. 28, 240 W. Nine Mile, Ferndale, (248) 399-3946.

Detroit Institute of Arts: SSM 7 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Jan. 4, admission \$8, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit (313) 833-7900.

Hill Auditorium: Mos Def and the Mos Def Big Band (hip hop), 7:30 p.m. Jan. 21, 825 N. University Ave., Ann Arbor \$25-\$45, (734) 764-2538, ums.org.



The World Famous Harlem Globetrotters are bringing their 'Magic As Ever' World Tour to The Palace on Sunday, December 30 at 2 p.m. Tickets at \$38, \$28, \$20 and \$15 on sale now at Palacenet.com, The Palace Box Office and all Ticketmaster locations. Special Courtside and Superfan seating is also available. Tickets can also be charged by phone to American Express, Discover, Visa and MasterCard by calling (248) 645-6666.

Oakland Community College's Performing Arts Program: Ilird Tyme Out, Jan. 25, Williams and Clark Expedition, April 11; Rhonda Vincent and the Rage, May 2, performances at 7:30 p.m. Student Center Arena, Highland Lakes Campus in Waterford except for Vincent, which will be at the Orchard Ridge campus, \$20; (248) 341-2270.

Music Hall Center for Performing Arts: Amel Larrieux and Dwele, Jan. 31, 350 Madison, Detroit, \$35-\$55, Ticketmaster, (313) 887-8500, www.musicHall.org.

First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak: Cabaret with Sunny Wilkinson, Feb. 1; Detroit Dance Collective, 529 Hendrie Blvd., Royal Oak (248) 541-0108.

Nardin Park Music Series: Brandon and Rich Ridenour, trumpet and piano, 2 p.m. Jan. 27, Nardin Park United Methodist Church, 29887 W. 11 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills (248) 476-8860 for information.

MUSEUMS

Detroit Institute of Arts: Julie Mehretu: City Sittings through March 30; the online store is open at www.diashop.org, 5200 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Call (313) 833-7900.

The Henry Ford: "Best of Friends: Buckminster Fuller and Isamu Noguchi," through Jan. 15, at 20900 Oakwood Blvd., west of the Southfield Freeway and south of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. Additional charges and varying hours for entry to Greenfield Village, Ford Rouge Factory Tour and IMAX Theatre. Call (313) 982-6001 or visit www.hfmgv.org.

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm: Adams Road Mastodon in special exhibit, one year after discovery by road crew at

Adams and M-59, through January 2008, 1-4 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, 1005 Van Hoosen Road (off of Tienken Road, one mile east of Rochester Road and one mile north of Downtown Rochester), (248) 565-4663, www.rochesterhills.org.

University of Michigan Museum of Art: Persian Visions: Photography from Iran, through Dec. 30, 1301 S. University Ave., Ann Arbor.

Cranbrook Science Museum: Featured exhibit is It's a Nano World. Permanent exhibits include planetarium, nature center and Bat Zone Conservatory, 39221 Woodward, Bloomfield Hills, general admission \$5-\$7, planetarium, \$1-\$3, (248) 645-3200 or www.cranbrook.edu.

Detroit Science Center: Extended Our Body: The Universe Within exhibit; new IMAX is Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure; Mummies: Secrets of the Pharaohs; begins in IMAX Jan. 12, call (313) 577-8400 or visit http://www.detroit-science-center.org.

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Finnish New Year's Eve Celebration: 4 p.m. Dec. 31 cocktails, 5 p.m. ring in Finnish New Year and Dinner, FCA Banquet Hall, 35200 W. Eight Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, \$25, (248) 478-6939.

OPERA

Detroit Opera House: "La Sonnambula," March 28, April 2, 4-6; "La Rondine," April 19-20, 23, 25-26; La Traviata, May 10-11, 14, 16-18; all at 1526 Broadway, Detroit. Visit www.michiganopera.org.

SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Ann Arbor Book Festival: The Author Lunch series kicks off with Deborah Rodriguez, author of Kabul Beauty School, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Jan. 8, Dahlmann Campus Inn, \$50, 615 E. Huron, Ann Arbor, www.aabookfestival.org.

Campus Martius Ice Rink: Skate away from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 10 a.m. to midnight on Saturday and noon to 8 p.m. Sunday through Jan. 1. The rink remains open through March with altered hours. Cost is \$6-\$7 for rink access and \$3 for skates. The rink is located on Woodward Ave. between Fort Street and Michigan Avenue in Detroit. Call (313) 962-0101 or visit www.campusmartiuspark.org.

Chinese New Year Spectacular: Traditional songs, dances and music, 7 p.m. Jan. 22, \$28-\$128, Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, (248) 645-6666, www.BestChineseShows.com.

Detroit Historical Society: Scholar Series with Loren Estleman, author of "Amos Walker's Detroit," and photographer Monte Nagler, 6-8 p.m. Jan. 8, free for DHS members, \$10 others, 5401 Woodward, Detroit (313) 833-1801, or visit www.detroithistorical.org/thingstodo.

Detroit Historical Society: Behind the Scenes Saturday tour series, Buhl Building, Jan. 12; and studios of Conservation and Museum Services where conservator Kenneth Katz restores artifacts, documents and paintings, Jan. 19; Wayne County Courthouse, Jan. 26; \$20 DHS members, \$25 guests, reservations suggested with required payments, (313) 833-1801, or visit www.detroithistorical.org/thingstodo.

Joe Louis Arena: "Saltimbanco Cirque Du Soleil," Jan. 23-27, Detroit, \$37.50-\$67.50, (248) 645-6666.

Troy Elks Club: Rhil's Fun Singles, "Dance the Night Away," Jan. 5; Pizza Night (\$1 slice), Jan. 19; Baseball Dance (with the Singing Hot Dog Man), Feb. 2; "Dance the Night Away," Feb. 16, \$10 admission to events, 1451 Big Beaver Rd., Troy, (248) 941-0120.

Plymouth International Ice Sculpture Spectacular: dozens of statues carved from a single block of ice, Jan. 25-27, downtown Plymouth.

Dearborn Inn-Marriott: 50th Anniversary of the White Rose Ball, presented by Hungarian Arts Club, music by Harmonia, club will acknowledge all former debutants and escorts at special reunion ball, Feb. 2, if you know of former debutants or escorts, have them call (248) 352-0927; call for tickets and information or visit Hungarianartsclub@hotmail.com.

The Palace of Auburn Hills: The Harlem Globetrotters, Dec. 30; The Bridal Celebration, Jan. 6; Suburban Michigan Spring Home Show, Jan. 12-13; Motocross, Feb. 9; Longhorn World Championship Rodeo, Feb. 14-15, visit palacenet.com or call (248) 645-6666.

THEATER - COLLEGE

University of Detroit Mercy Theatre Company: "And Neither Have I Wings to Fly," Feb. 1-17; "The Play About the Baby," March 28-April 6; 8425 W. McNichols, Detroit (313) 993-3270, theatre.udmercy.edu.

THEATER - COMMUNITY

Avon Players: "You Can't Take it With You," Jan. 11-13, 18-20, 25-26; 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, \$14, \$12 student/senior discount for Sunday matinees, \$9 opening night tickets, 1185 Washington Blvd. (one mile west of intersection of Tienken and Rochester roads, Rochester Hills, reserve tickets by calling (248) 608-9077.

Grantland Street Players: Auditions for "Oliver"

(adults and children needed to fill over 30 roles), adults 7 p.m. Jan. 11 or 18; children ages 5-10, noon Jan. 12 or 19; children ages 11-14, 2 p.m. Jan. 12 or 19, ages 15 and up audition 7 p.m. Friday, sing a portion of song from Oliver, you may be asked to read from a script (English and Cockney accent is preferred) or sing in chorus if you prefer, rehearsals Saturdays and Sundays, production dates May 23-25, 30-31, and June 1, Grantland Street Playhouse, 27555 Grantland, Livonia, e-mail nlflo@aol.com or call (313) 535-8962.

The Farmington Players: "Chapter Two," Feb. 15-29, March 1-8; "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," April 25-27, May 1-17, ticket hotline, (248) 553-2955, www.farmingtonplayers.org.

Marquis Theatre: "Jungle Book," through Jan. 27, \$8, 135 Main, Northville (248) 349-8110, www.northvillemarquistheatre.com.

Matrix Theatre Company: Auditions for teen written production of "Caution: This is How It's Caught," informing teens about HIV/AIDS, 4-6 p.m. Jan. 2-4, 7-9; rehearsals, Jan. 14-March 16; 2730 Bagley, Detroit (313) 967-0999; www.matrixtheatre.org.

St. Dunstan's Theatre Guild: "A Streetcar Named Desire," Jan. 18-26; "The Cemetery Club," March 7-15; "Greater Tuna," April 11-19; "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," May 30-June 14; (248) 737-3587 or www.StDunstanTheatre.com, 400 Lone Pine Rd., Bloomfield Hills (248) 737-3587, www.stdunstantheatre.com.

Stagecrafters: "Cabaret," Jan. 18-Feb. 10, 415 S. Lafayette, Royal Oak (248) 541-6430.

Village Players of Birmingham: Three Tall Women, Edward Albee's Pulitzer Prize winning drama, 8 p.m. Jan. 11-12, 18-19; 2 p.m. Jan. 13 and 20; \$15; Village Players Playhouse, 34660 Woodward, Birmingham (2 blocks south of Maple), (248) 644-2075, www.birminghamvillageplayers.com.

Wild Swan Theater: "Strega Nona and the Magic Pasta Pot," Jan. 24-26; 410 S. Maple, Ann Arbor (734) 995-0530, www.wildswantheater.org.

THEATER-PROFESSIONAL

Detroit Opera House: Richard Loring's "African Footprint," Jan. 19-20, 1526 Broadway, Detroit. \$15-\$75 at (313) 237-SING (7464) or online at www.MichiganOpera.org.

Gem Theatre: "Forbidden Christmas," through Dec. 31, 333 Madison Ave, Detroit, call (313) 963-9800. Visit online at www.gemtheatre.com.

Broadway Onstage Live Theatre: "Corpse," Jan. 11-Feb. 9; "Weekend Comedy," Feb. 22-March 29; "Escanaba in Da Moonlight," April 11-May 17; \$16, 21517 Kelly Rd. (at Toepfer) in Eastpointe. ticket reservations recommended, (586) 771-6333.

Fisher Theatre: "Whistle Down the Wind," Jan. 8-27; Mamma Mia! Feb. 12-24, at 301 W. Grand Blvd., Detroit (313) 872-1000, www.BroadwayinDetroit.com.

Fox Theatre: "Jesus Christ Superstar," March 14-15, \$22-\$69; "The Color Purple," May 20-June 1, \$39.50-\$65; OlympiaEntertainment.com, (248) 433-1515.

Meadow Brook Theatre: "Rabbit Hole," Jan. 9-Feb. 3; "Biloxi Blues," Feb. 13-March 9; "Moonlight and Magnolias," March 19-April 13; "Man of La Mancha," April 23-May 18; on the campus of Oakland University, Rochester Hills (248) 377-0300, www.ticketmaster.com, for more information, visit www.mbttheatre.com.

Planet Ant Theatre: "A Man of No Importance," Feb. 22-March 15; "On Parenting," Feb. 29-March 15, 2357 Caniff, Hamtramck, (313) 365-4948.



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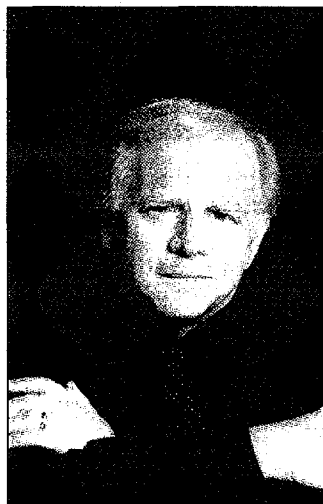
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REWIND

FROM PAGE E5

director of the Detroit Opera House, fulfilled his dream of writing his own original opera. *Cyrano*, a story masterfully crafted with heart, humor and romance, opened to sold out crowds here in Detroit and will live on into 2008 with productions in Miami and Philadelphia.

Also in October **Leonard Slatkin** was named the 12th music director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra for the



2008-09 season. Called "America's music director" by the Los Angeles Times, Slatkin is a tremendous talent, a household name with an international reputation. In the United States, he regularly conducts the New York

Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and The Philadelphia Orchestra. Slatkin has made more than 100 recordings with various ensembles around the world, garnering over 50 Grammy nominations, of which Slatkin received the award five times.

The **Detroit Institute of Arts** held its long-awaited grand opening in November to huge crowds. The exhibits now take on a whole new look with new wall paint, additional exhibit rooms and expanded areas, and "people-friendly" information panels so that visitors don't need to be an arts history major to understand what the artists intended in terms of symbolism or statement in terms of paintings, sculptures, etc. It is a great place to bring the kids, (and of course, the grown-up ones, too).



A child stares into a store at Somerset Collection as Hannah Montana shops inside.



David DiChiera

It's a marvelous makeover, one that even helped boost Detroit's tourism potential in the eyes of the New York Times and Washington Post.

The hottest concert ticket of the year, which sold out immediately after going on sale Sept. 29, belongs to Miley Cyrus. The daughter of Billy Ray Cyrus is known best by her fictional Disney channel character **Hannah Montana**. By donning a blonde wig she transforms into the

pop star and has won over legions of tween fans across the country. The 15,000 lucky ticketholders were a-flutter in early December. A lucky few got a glimpse of the 15-year-old star as she shopped her heart out at Troy's Somerset Collection on Dec. 4, the night before the show. Miley tried on a sparkly black shirt at Michael Kors as fans, like Sophie Yanachik of Rochester Hills, milled about outside, hoping to get a glimpse of the Disney star.

By Filter staffers Ken Abramczyk, Stephanie A. Casola and Lana Mini

NEW YEAR'S EVE

FROM PAGE E7

The Rugby Grille: Two seating times for its New Year's Eve celebration. Diners at the 6 p.m. seating receive five courses including choices of Maine lobster and diver scallops, prime beef rib eye or Millbrook Farms rack of lamb, artesian cheeses and chocolate lava cake. Guests at the 9 p.m. seating receive the same menu in addition to a fish course, as well as a champagne toast, top hats, tiaras, noise makers, and confetti. Piano music will be featured at the 6 p.m. seating, and the musical group L'USA featuring Royce will perform in the Tea Lobby during the 9 p.m. seating. 6 p.m., is \$90 per person and 9 p.m. is \$160 per person. The Rugby

Grille is located inside The Townsend Hotel, 100 Townsend Street, Birmingham, (248) 642-7900.

MGM Grand: New MGM Grand Detroit will celebrate 2008 with hot entertainment, delectable cuisine and a party not to be missed. Hosting the premier party will be swing band Cherry Poppin' Daddies from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Evening will include a private dinner along with a decadent dessert table and cotton candy station. Admission also includes a champagne toast and party favors to celebrate the evening. Tickets are \$200 per person and can be purchased at all Ticketmaster outlets. MGM Grand Detroit, also will extend the party beyond hotel to 3 of its lounges with live entertainment.

Compiled by Stephanie A. Casola, Lana Mini and Ken Abramczyk

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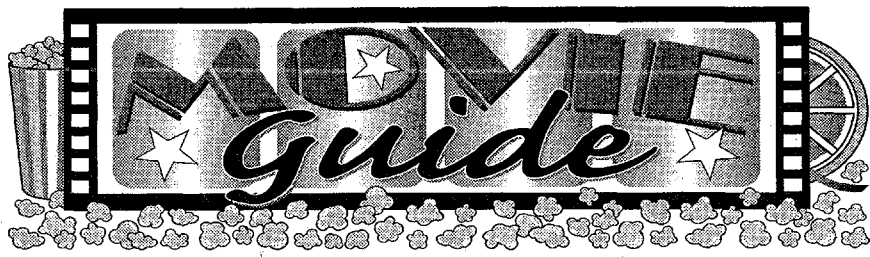
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SCHOOL

FROM PAGE E3

School of Rock manager. Satellite and School of Rock have played together at Lollapalooza. The band has also played with Alice Cooper, Eddie Vedder and Aerosmith.

And student some musicians graduate to other big names in music - two members now play with Andrian Belew.

On stage, during any given song, there's five to eight kids on stage. The show is two hours with most songs slanted toward classic rock. But the audi-

ence won't be just adults - teenagers are interested in classic rock. In fact, it's so popular that the Led Zeppelin *Swan Song* T-shirt is the No. 1 best selling shirt at Hot Topic stores, a chain marketed toward teenagers.

Why would teenagers be interested in classic rock?

"Because it's good music. Most new music out there is horrible right now," Green said. "And classic rock isn't just for older people...."

Green said he isn't trying to be an arbitrator of taste. Students who enroll in School of Rock listen are metal heads, folk music lovers, classical music fans and more.

"We don't let the students pick the songs that will be played just as Princeton University wouldn't let students pick the books that will be used."

School of Rock music schools are opening nationwide. In January, a location will open in Rochester.

The School of Rock program supplements weekly private lessons with group band practice in a challenging yet supportive environment. The students, learn by playing classic rock ranging from the Beatles to Led Zeppelin. Not all students are chosen for the All-Star touring band, but they all have opportunity to perform in other shows.

"What I learned from playing in bands

in the '80s and '90s is that if I knew then what I knew now, I wouldn't have necessarily made it (famous) but I would have known how to try," Green said.

The students also played with vocalist Jon Anderson, of Yes, who Green said is teaching students "how to behave like a rock star. Graciously."

School of Rock is growing with plans for touring festival. It held one last year where legendary punk bands Bad Brains and also Ween headlined. The goal is eventually see the franchise with 400 schools nationwide and then expand internationally.

For Green, it's about saving rock 'n' roll - one kid at a time.

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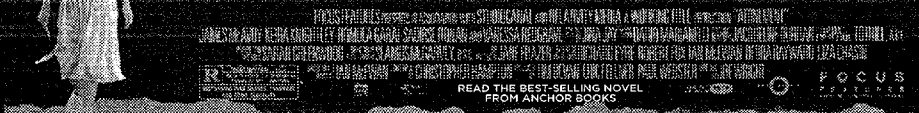
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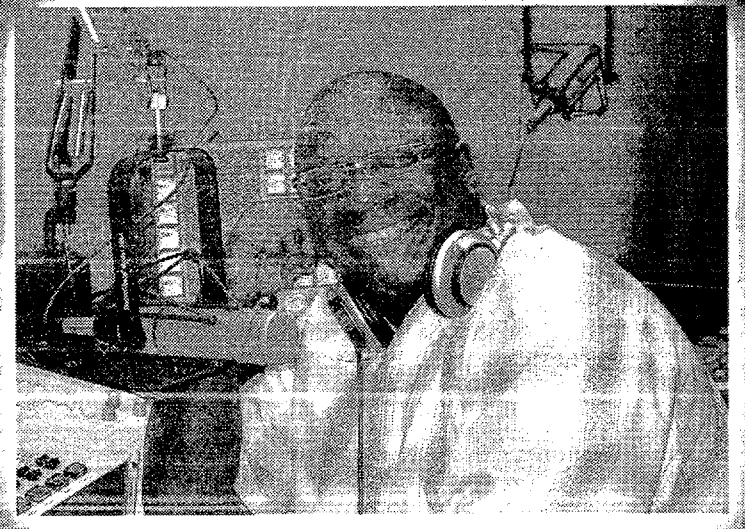
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