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Randy Scott at Jazz on the Grass

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PLYMOUTH Observer

THURSDAY
June 19, 2008

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Teacher guilty of sex with student

BY TIFFANY L. PARKS
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

After less than two hours' deliberation, a jury Tuesday found former Plymouth Christian Academy teacher Stephanie Ann Stein guilty of having sex with a former student, who was 15 when their relationship began.

The 32-year-old Canton woman was found guilty of two counts of third-degree criminal sexual conduct, both 15-year felonies; one count of using the Internet to communicate with a minor to commit a crime, a four-year felony; and one count of distributing obscene material of a sexual nature to a minor, a two-year felony.

Stein's sentencing is set for July 2 in Wayne County Circuit Court. "I expected this verdict," Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor Lora Weingarden said. "Let this be a lesson to

teachers everywhere that they can't be involved with students."

Some of the most damning testimony occurred Monday, when the Canton teenager said Stein knowingly broke the law when she agreed to have sex with him.

"She didn't want me to tell anybody because she didn't want it to get around," the boy, now 16, said in reference to his relationship last year with Stein, his former English teacher at PCA.

The teen, whose identity has not been published, said he tried to downplay Stein's participation in their courtship when he was first approached by Canton Police Department detectives by saying that he "made" the mother of two have sex with him and send nude photographs to his cell phone.

"She still loved me," he said. "I thought I was still in love with her."

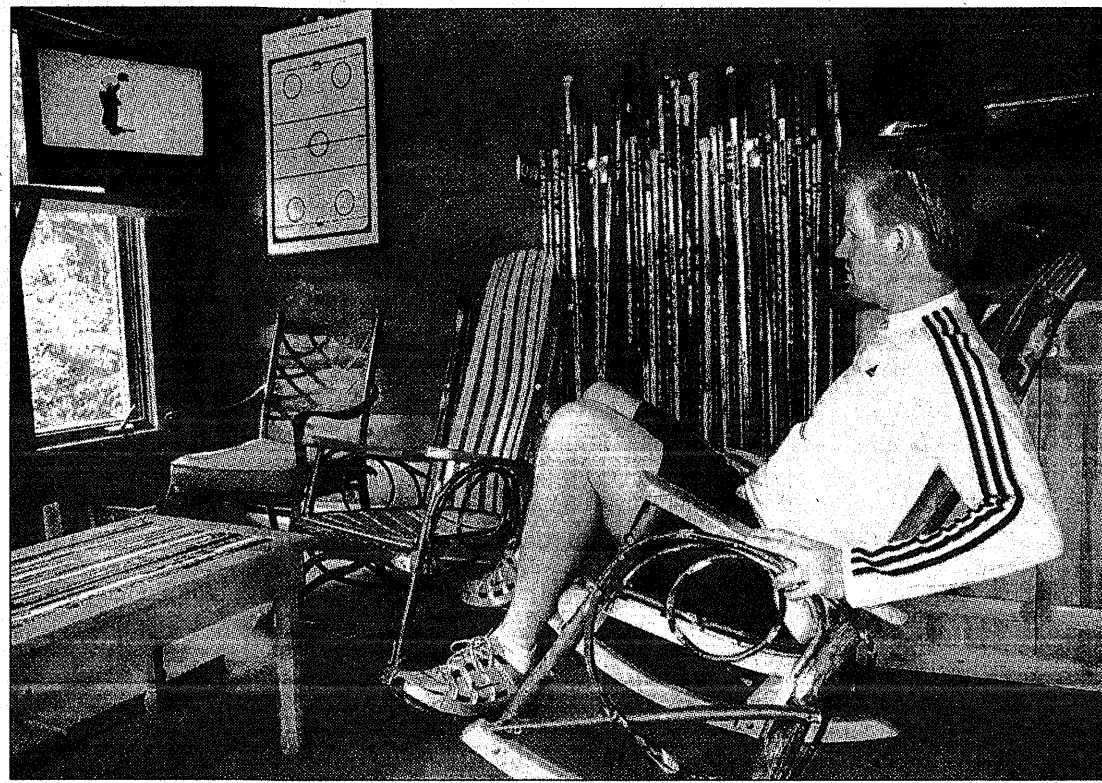
The teenager testified his relationship with Stein intensified last spring, when he was 15.

In addition to visiting her home when her husband and young children were present under the guise of a mentor-student relationship, he testified they often ventured away from the "Canton suburban area" and went on dates to Belle Isle and various other parks.

Although Stein's attorney Todd Flood argued the teen manipulated and lured his client into a relationship by lying about his past, the boy said her participation was voluntary and the two often spoke of getting married and had decided on names for their future children: Aidan for a boy and Ava for a girl.

At one point, the teen presented Stein with a ring, which she wore. The boy also said it was Stein's decision to back down from her initial goal of waiting until he turned 16 — the legal age of consent — to have sex.

"She wanted it to happen," he said. "She meant a lot to me at that point."



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chris Osgood watches Tiger Woods and Rocco Mediate battle in the U.S. Open from the comfort of the little cabin he built in his Plymouth yard.

Some place like home

Ozzie compares Plymouth to his own B.C. town

BY TONY BRUSCATO
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Detroit Red Wings goalie Chris Osgood said living in Plymouth reminds him of the small British Columbia town in the Rocky Mountains he grew up in, only bigger.

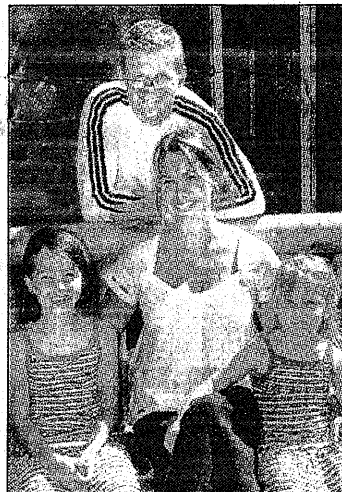
"It feels like home in Canada," Osgood said, getting some recuperating time after weeks of activity following the Red Wings' Stanley Cup victory. "It has the same old streets with big trees hanging over them, like in Medicine Hat; lots of parks with kids' playgrounds; you can walk downtown and the school (Bird Elementary, where one of his two children attends) is close. And the downtown is nice here. "This is the best area I've

THE OSGOOD FILE

- Who: Chris Osgood
- Job: Detroit Red Wings goalie
- Where: Lives in Plymouth with wife, Jenna, and daughters Mackenzie and Sydney
- Notable: Three-time Stanley Cup champion
- Home cooking: Osgood favorably compares Plymouth with the small, British Columbia town he grew up in

lived in around here," added Osgood, 35, who has lived in Farmington Hills, Birmingham and Northville. "Plymouth has a lot of character."

Please see **OSGOOD, A2**



Red Wings goalie Chris Osgood, with wife Jenna and daughters Mackenzie and Sydney, said Plymouth is comparable to Medicine Hat, his British Columbia hometown.

Summer concert series hitting right notes

BY TONY BRUSCATO
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Guy Louis Sferlazza said despite being 47 years old, he doesn't plan on growing up anytime soon.

That's good news for children of all ages now that the Music in the Park series, sponsored by the Plymouth Community Arts Council, began its 24th season Wednesday at in Kellogg Park.

The 10-week series is rumored to bring out the largest contingent of strollers at one time of anywhere in the country, and that's kept Guy Louis' Chautauqua Express coming

back to Kellogg Park for nearly 20 years. "Plymouth is easily one of the biggest summer concert venues, and the crowds are always fabulous," said Sferlazza, who resides in Shelby Township. "When it comes to the summer concert shows, I like to stir up the crowd and have fun. My goal is to get the kids engaged so the parents can enjoy their kids and the show, too."

Deb Madonna of Plymouth Township, PCAC chairperson for the concert series, said she remembers 14 years ago when each concert would draw about 400 people to Kellogg Park. Now, Madonna said, it's not unusual to have more than 2,000.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Crowds of kids and parents descend on Plymouth's Kellogg Park for the first of the summer Music in the Park concerts. The weekly Wednesday noon concerts are sponsored by the Plymouth Community Arts Council.

"We get some new acts each year, but for this audience keeping some of the same is important because they have their favorites," Madonna said. "It's the predictability and continuity that makes it a success, and it's so interactive the kids have a great time."

Madonna said the PCAC budget is about \$10,000 for the entire summer concert series, but only about half has been raised and fundraising continues. Current sponsors include Main Street Bank, Huron Valley Ambulance, Plymouth A.M. Rotary and McCully's Educational Resource Center.

City faces decision on Daisy wall

BY TONY BRUSCATO
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

The lone remaining wall — and last reminder — of the former Daisy air rifle factory that helped put Plymouth on the map could itself become history.

The Plymouth Planning Commission will soon have to decide if the historic wall, part of the windmill and gun factory dating back to 1882, is history that needs to be saved as part of a six-unit condominium building, despite claims by the developer that deterioration makes it cost-prohibitive; or if it should allow Joseph Freed and Associates to tear it down and construct a replica building.

"Suddenly, it's structurally unsound," said Tara Parks, one of the planning commissioners who favors holding Freed to its promise to use the propped-up wall on Union Street in the new construction. "Three years ago it was sound enough ... and now we have a wall that's an eyesore. If you rebuild, that's not historical significance."

Barry Levin, Daisy Square project manager, told the planning commission the wall isn't stable and would need costly renovation work to stabilize the foundation and repair weathered and deteriorating bricks and mortar.

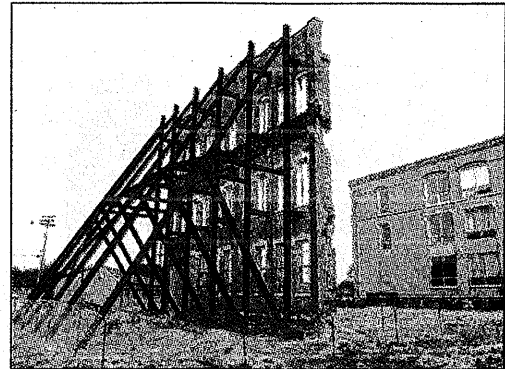
"It's missing some sections, so even if we were to try and build a windmill building under the original plans, we would need to do some significant reconditioning and provide additional architectural elements to match the existing elements," Levin said. "If we demolish the wall, we could incorporate some of those elements into a new building and some into a park in front of the building ... and tell the story of what happened at the site and why it's so important to the city of Plymouth."

While some planning commissioners want Freed to live up to its promise, others say they "aren't married" to the wall and want to know what other amenities can be added to the project if it's torn down.

Members of the Plymouth Preservation Network presented commissioners with more than 250 petition signatures to save the wall.

"Historic preservation is more than an attempt to maintain old buildings for posterity's sake; it serves as a planning and economic development tool," said Jennifer Philpot-Munson of the PPN. "We feel that permitting Freed and Associates to demolish the facade of the factory sends the wrong message about Plymouth, that we are not concerned with preserving what makes Plymouth a unique community in which to live and that developers can get their way if they let enough time pass."

tbruscato@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2172



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The original Daisy facade stands in front of the Daisy Square development. Planning commissioners face a decision on whether to save the wall.

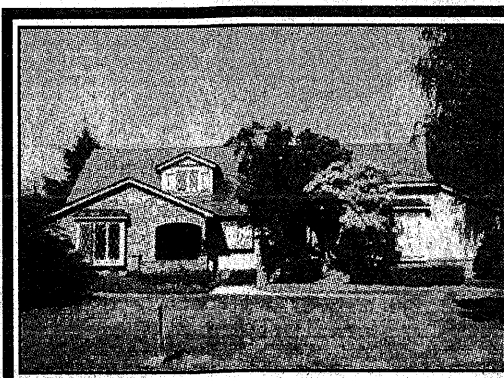
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Coming Sunday in Health



Working and walking to raise awareness about psoriasis

ON STAGE

Music in the Park

The Music in the Park "kid-die" concert series, hosted by the Plymouth Community Arts Council and sponsored by Main Street Bank, Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M., and Huron Valley Ambulance, takes to the Kellogg Park stage Wednesdays at noon.

- The schedule:
- June 25 - Guy Louis, Chataqua Express
 - July 2 - Beverly Meyer
 - July 9 - Gemini
 - July 16 - Like Water
- Drumworks
- July 23 - Jan Krist
 - July 30 - Zak Morgan
 - Aug. 6 - elmoThumm
 - Aug. 13 - Guy Louis, Chataqua Express
 - Aug. 20 - Matt Watroba & Friends

Music in the Air

Here's the schedule for the Music in the Air concert series, sponsored by the Plymouth Downtown Development Authority and Blue Cross/Blue Shield:

- June 20: Randy Brock Group
- June 27: Gia Warner
- July 4: Steve King & the Dittiles
- July 18: Mass Transit Band
- July 25: Bluescasters
- Aug. 1: Paul King's Rhythm Society
- Aug. 8: Trilogy Band
- Aug. 15: Sean Riley Band
- Aug. 22: Fifty Amp Fuse
- Aug. 29: Lady Sunshine and the X Band

PHS grad list set for Sunday

Parents, families and friends of the Plymouth High School Class of 2008 looking for the traditional list of graduates and accompanying photos will find them in the Sunday, June 21, *Observer*. There is also a photo gallery on-line at our Web site, www.hometownlife.com.

"Around Plymouth" is designed to announce upcoming events taking place in the community. Items will run on a space-available basis. Send details to bkadrich@hometownlife.com

Band reunion barbecue

The Plymouth-Canton Marching Band and Music Boosters are hosting the "PCMB All Decades Alumni Reunion Picnic & BBQ" for current student members and parents, alumni, staff, former boosters, etc., Saturday, June 21, at Canton's Summit on the Park Amphitheatre in Heritage Park.

Any student or parent who has participated in the Plymouth-Canton Educational Park music programs or marched with the award-winning Plymouth-Canton Marching Band, is invited to attend the weekend event. Registration is required.

The picnic and barbecue is scheduled noon to 9 p.m. Saturday, June 21. A golf outing is also being planned for Sunday, June 22. Registration for the picnic is required. For more information and to register, visit www.pcmb.net and click on the

alumni picnic link. For more information, call Chris Hensel, Plymouth-Canton Music Boosters Alumni Rep, (313) 268-2098 or e-mail alumni BBQ coordinators Lee Bonner at bonner_lee@yahoo.com or Bryan Thomas at bryan.thomas91@yahoo.com

Summer movie series

The Penn Theatre hosts the "Summer Cinema Matinee Series," through the end of August, with free passes available at Michgian Made & More and Westchester Barber Shop.

Sponsored by the Packaging Corporation of America and the Plymouth District Library, the schedule includes: June 19, Antz; June 26, Flipper; July 10, Hans Christian Andersen; July 17, Charlotte's Web; July 24, The Wizard of Oz; July 31, National Velvet; Aug. 7, Life Begins for Andy Hardy; Aug. 14, The Yearling; Aug. 21, Swiss Family Robinson; Aug. 28, The Muppet Movie. Showtimes are at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.; the box office opens 30 minutes before each showing; all seats \$3. The Penn Theatre is located at 760 Penniman

AROUND PLYMOUTH



Here she comes ...

Katie Lorenz, a 2002 graduate of Plymouth Canton High School, will compete for the title of Miss Illinois Saturday, June 21, in St. Charles, Ill. Lorenz, the reigning Miss Chicago, is attending graduate school at Loyola University in Chicago. She is the daughter of Scott and Yvonne Lorenz of Plymouth and a 2006 graduate of the University of Michigan. She is employed by Publicis, a large ad agency in Chicago.

in downtown Plymouth. For more information visit the

theater's Web site at www.penntheatre.com or call (734) 453-0870.

Nichols house tour

The Plymouth Historical Museum and the Plymouth Preservation Network present a tour of the Ella Roe Nichols House 1-2 p.m. Saturday, June 21. The large bed and breakfast complex located at 932 Penniman Avenue, built in 1903, was once home to Ella Roe Nichols. Participants can learn about Nichols' life, her connection to Abraham Lincoln and how she came to call Plymouth home.

Cost is \$10 per person for members of the Plymouth Historical Society. \$15 per person for non-members. Limit of 15 people on tour. Tickets available at the Plymouth Historical Museum during museum hours: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 1-4 p.m. or purchase tickets through PayPal at www.plymouthhistory.org/Events.html

King Gemba exhibit

The exhibit, play and book of "King Gemba - Legends of

Leadership" is coming to the Plymouth Community Arts Council (PCAC) this summer. Written by local author Jeanne Swanson and illustrated by PCAC drawing and painting instructor Pamela Grossmann, the children's book weaves a story about principles of leadership.

The original watercolor illustrations created for the book by Grossmann, and a synopsis of the book will be on exhibit 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday at the PCAC through Aug. 29. Works by PCAC pottery instructor Jeffrey Burda are also included in the exhibit.

The PCAC's children's theatre group, the Plymouth Uptown Players (PUPS), perform the play of "King Gemba" 6:30 p.m. Friday, June 20. Get a copy of the book signed during an open house before the play from 5:30-6:30 p.m. The exhibit and play are open to the public and free of charge. Books are available at PCAC for \$20. All events will be at the Plymouth Community Arts Council, 774 N. Sheldon Road, Plymouth. Call (734) 416-4278 for more information or click on www.plymoutharts.com

OSGOOD

FROM PAGE A1

As a three-time Stanley Cup champion, one might figure the well-known Osgood would be recognized so much it might be better to just stay at home rather than never having a moment away from well-wishers and those seeking autographs. "People here generally leave me alone," Osgood said. "After we won the Cup, they were all fired up. My neighbor put sheets on the house and there was a Stanley Cup with lights around it. It was a crazy time, but that's good, I didn't mind it." In fact, the soft-spoken goalie said he likes to get out

and play golf at Fox Hills and spending time downtown frequenting Sean O'Callaghan's Irish Pub, the Penn Grille and Jimmy Johns.

Osgood's wife, Jenna — who grew up in Westland and admits to being one of those teenagers who used to grid-lock downtown while cruising Main Street — agreed they live in relative obscurity. "A lot of people know where we live, but it's really awesome, no one really bothers us," said Jenna Osgood, 38. "Plymouth is very family-oriented, and that's what we wanted when we moved here. Even when Chris picks up the kids, he's just like a normal guy." "Of course, as soon as the banner was put on our house with 'Way to go Stanley Cup Champs,' everybody knew where we lived," she added. "People drive by and beep, and then get disappointed when it's just me." The Osgoods like being the

neighbor next door, and more times than not there are kids in and out of the huge backyard that borders Tonquish Creek, where there's a tennis court-turned-hockey rink. "It never really stays cold for a long period of time to keep it an ice rink," Chris Osgood said. "The kids who come can't skate anyway, so I just leave it like this so everybody can play." "Sometimes we have tournaments, but I don't play," he added. "The neighbor kids play, that's what it's for." For his relaxation, Chris has a small cabin next to the rink with refrigerators, a flat-screen television and a wood stove. "In the winter, I put wood in the stove and light it up, relax and watch *Hockey Night in Canada*," he said. Jenna and Chris met about 10 years ago in Farmington Hills after being introduced by a roommate of Jenna's. "I really wasn't into hockey at the time," Jenna said. "But

now I love it and I watch a different game. I don't watch in the center, like most people. I watch goalie and goalie. Even the defensemen's wives watch the game differently ... you focus on the position." The Osgoods' basement is decorated with Red Wings memorabilia, and there's a "bubble" hockey game. "When we met, the first three games I played Chris, I beat him," Jenna is quick to point out. In the off-season, there is plenty of time to spend with their two children — 7-year-old Mackenzie and 3-year-old Sydney — who, as most kids, like playing at the fountain in Kellogg Park. "When Chris is gone and I'm trying to be creative with stuff to do, they just want to go to the park," Jenna said. "And they like Gabriel's because they love Webkinz. And we just love Music in the Park." Chris said he likes spending time in the backyard with his girls, with as much attention as they will afford him. "We play soccer and kick ball, I teach them how to play hockey," he said. "After about a half-hour, though, they want to do girl things and resort

back to the fort and play with their dolls or play in their cars ... or in the creek." Mackenzie is just learning hockey, and Sydney is too young to understand her dad is a three-time Stanley Cup champ. That's OK with Osgood. "It's good, maybe they can do their own thing," he said. "As long as they have fun when they go to the games, that's all that matters to me. Mackenzie did know what was going on in the playoffs, she was fired up. She talked to the kids at school about it and thinks it's pretty cool, now." Osgood said he plans to get away with his family for a while after an exhausting run for the Cup, followed by non-stop days of celebrations and activities, including the parade in downtown Detroit. Every player on the Red Wings will have a chance to have the Stanley Cup for a day, and Osgood said he may ask for it in September. "I have everybody asking me what I'm going to do with it, but I really don't know," Osgood said. "I might take it to my daughter's school and to downtown. We'll just have to see."

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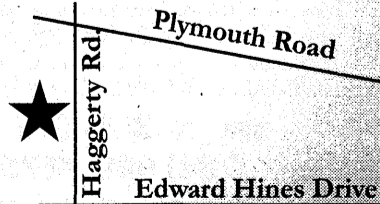


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Granholm announces pump inspector additions

BY TONY BRUSCATO
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Governor Jennifer Granholm used the Plymouth SuperCenter on Ann Arbor Road as the backdrop to announce the Department of Agriculture has more than doubled the number of gasoline station inspectors to combat complaints statewide.

Granholm said the state has hired 13 inspectors to what was a 10-person team to inspect more than 4,000 gas stations statewide. The governor said the number of complaints continues to rise.

"On average we get about 400 complaints a month and these guys inspect over 2,000 gas stations per month," said Granholm, who arrived in a hybrid Chevrolet Tahoe. "This year, for example, they found over 200 violations from gas stations that have not met compliance quality or quantity. If they find a violation, they've either got to shut down the pump or fix the pump to make sure citizens are getting what they paid for."

Granholm said while the number of complaints has gone up, the actual number of violations has decreased.

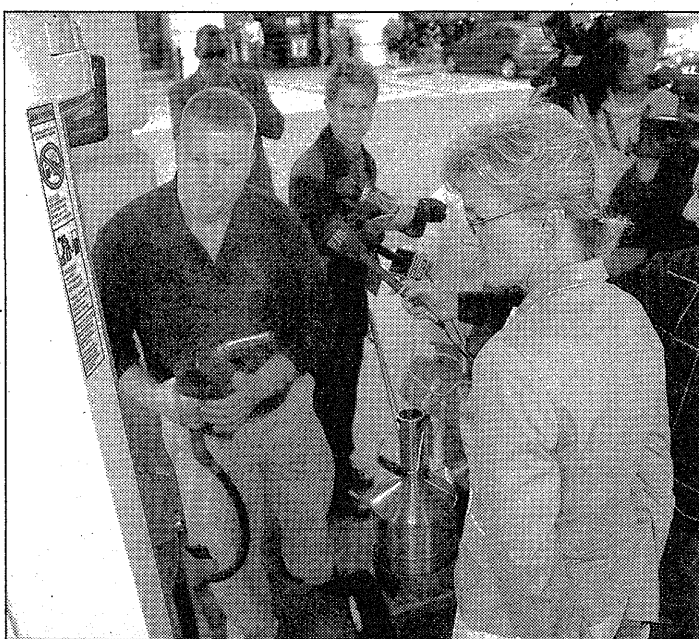
The governor also announced legislation has been introduced that will allow the state attorney general more power to investigate price fixing and gas gouging.

"Some of you may remember in the wake of 9/11 a number of gas stations jacked up their prices as the result of terrorist attacks," said Granholm. "This will insure that citizens are protected. Michigan has the most robust inspection program in the nation."

During Granholm's announcement, motor fuels inspector Willem Vilders tested the gasoline pumps of the Marathon gas station at the SuperCenter and reported consumers are receiving the quantity of gasoline they paid for. A gasoline sample will be tested in a lab to determine the quality of the gasoline.

SuperCenter General Manager Adam Abuageel said he wasn't concerned about the outcome of the test.

"I know my pumps are calibrated, we do that every single year," said Abuageel. "We don't make any money anyway, so why would we want to cheat?"



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Motor Fuels Inspector Willem Vilders explains to Gov. Jennifer Granholm and the media how the gas pump's accuracy is measured.

Abuageel said he only makes about four cents a gallon, and by the time he pays his bills the gas station loses money.

"In the month of April, we pumped 250,000 gallons

and we lost \$15,000," said Abuageel. "We keep the gas as a loss leader to bring the customers in and use our other services."

Joyce Schier of Plymouth Township, who stopped in to

fill-up her car, was pleased to hear the SuperCenter passed the quantity test.

"Quantity I never question, quality I do worry about," said Schier. "You wonder sometimes when the tanks are low and they're getting a delivery if something is getting stirred up. Having more inspectors gives me more confidence."

Granholm also said she will be talking with unions representing state workers to explore the possibility of a four-day, 10-hour work week to help save on gas and improve customer service.

"If we went to 10-hour days, people who might work during the day could access those services either before or after their normal work hour," Granholm said. "It would allow state employees to be able to save, it would significantly reduce the amount of money being spent on gasoline and also allow us to be flexible and provide service at a time when people need it."

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Kara Gavin of Plymouth with Brad Rutter, the winningest player on 'Jeopardy!' with over \$3 million, and Ken Jennings, who has the longest winning streak on 'Jeopardy!' at 74 games, during which he earned \$2.5 million.

Jeopardy! challenge

Plymouth woman answers game show's call

BY TONY BRUSCATO
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

If you ask Kara Gavin of Plymouth how she fared recently as a contestant on the game show Jeopardy!, she'll just smile like a Cheshire cat.

Only Gavin and her father – the pair traveled together in March for the taping – know how much money she won. And, because of a confidentiality agreement, everyone else will just have to wait until Thursday night.

"It's been hard not to tell," admitted Gavin, 37, a public relations representative at the University of Michigan Health System. "I haven't even told my husband. And, as far as I know, my mom doesn't know, either."

Five years ago, Gavin – despite a graduate degree in journalism from Columbia University – failed to pass a written test at a Jeopardy search in Dearborn. However, that didn't discourage her from trying again in an on-line search, and in May 2006 Gavin received an e-mail informing her to be at Chicago's Navy Pier the next month for another test and mock game.

"They told us there was a very good chance we would make the show, but it could be more than a year before we would hear from them," said Gavin. "Last November I figured it wasn't going to happen this time either, but then in December I received another e-mail to go to California."

As luck would have it, Gavin, her husband, Sean, and her father from Vermont were at Detroit Metro Airport when she received an unexpected telephone call.

"We were literally in line to get on the plane when the producer of the show called to say (host) Alex (Trebek) had a minor heart attack," Gavin said. "All the adrenalin left my body, and there was a huge flash of disappointment."

The big moment was rescheduled for March 18, when Gavin and her father flew west.

"They play five games a day for two days, and they told us to bring a couple of changes of clothes," Gavin said. "If we win, then you get a chance to go back stage and change."

"It's very much a game of reflexes, not to ring in too early or too late as well as know the answer," she said. "You have to trust your gut, you can second-guess yourself very quickly. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

Although admittedly having "a head full of useless knowledge that came in handy," Gavin revealed she didn't get any questions in her strong subject areas of Shakespeare, song lyrics, science and music.

"But, I did answer one question that people from Michigan will be proud of me for getting," said Gavin.

The show airs 7:30 p.m. tonight (Thursday) on WDIV (Channel 4).

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Children's book brings Bible teachings to life

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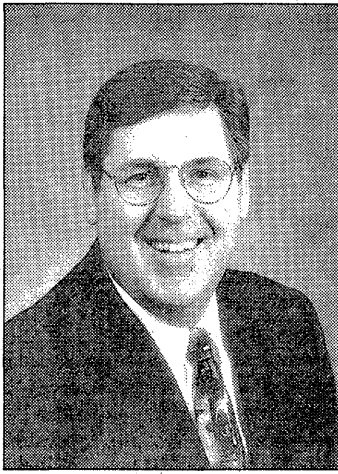
FROM PAGE A4

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

David Kraai knew he had to find a better way to teach children about God than having them memorize Bible stories. The fifth grade boys in his Sunday School class could already spout tales like Jonah and the Whale by heart. After praying about this dilemma, Kraai realized he had to change his perspective to make the subject more interesting not only for his students but the masses.

"I Have to Save My Mini-Bot!" is episode one of the Solomon's Quest series he plans to write and self-publish. The brightly colored cartoon illustrations by Tom Roy immediately attract children of all ages. Roy is a Lathrup Village artist who wrote a comic strip, *The Pitts*, for the Detroit Free Press. The pair set publishing history by printing their first non-denominational Christian children's book in English, Spanish and Braille all at the same time. The graphics and text are both in Braille so many blind children are seeing an angel for the first time.

"You don't change the story," said Kraai, former children's pastor at Ekklesia Detroit in Westland. "Each story, character and event were carefully



David Kraai has been involved with children's ministries for more than 30-years.

placed there by God so you could understand your creator, savior, your enemy, and yourself. The story of David and Goliath is really about you. The lead character is patterned after me. Like me he's adopted and has a hard time seeing himself as lovable. The adoption process makes us feel unlovable. He still has issues and is on a journey to discover God."

Kraai uses a giant computer brain to entice Danny Abel just as he did with his Sunday School students at Brightmoor Christian Church in Novi. Every week he built a time machine, space shuttle

or plane to keep the children's attention. Qubirt was an 8-foot-tall computer which had faces to talk to the kids. In the book Goliath is smarter than its creator and installs the Bible in its memory.

"I felt it was necessary to reach out to kids and give them the message," said Kraai who's been in children's ministries for more than 30 years. "I wanted to come at it from the perspective of how I approach things, if it's not fun why would I want to be there?" Rev. David Boyd, formerly in charge of children's ministries for Assembly of God, suggested Kraai write a devotions book to go along with *I Have to Save My Mini-Bot!* so children would spend more time interpreting what they read. A coloring book is also in production for the youngest set.

"We're losing the children," said Kraai. "The coloring book helps me reach the smaller churches who probably don't have children's ministries."

Kraai said he'd like to schedule book signings at area churches no matter what the denomination. In the meantime he's busy at work on episode two due out this fall. In the back of the first book is a poster announcing "I've Waited My Whole Life For This."



A new Christian storybook teaches children about the Bible by making it all about them.

The books cost \$19.95, \$12.95 for the devotions now under the imprint of Earnest Publications which is named after Kraai's father. A portion of the proceeds go to Center for the Blind of the Assemblies of God (www.blind.ag.org) based in Missouri. Paul Weingartner, director of the center, encouraged Kraai to publish in Braille. Sarah Sykes spent 120 hours transcribing the text for the first book. For more information, visit www.solomonsquest.com or call

(810) 569-5396.

"There's strife. It's reality based but it's not boring," said Kraai. "I've done a lot of focus groups and had kids coming back and saying 'we couldn't stop laughing in Chapter 2. It's just the way we talk.' You won't ever find a swear word or questionable things in the book. My whole goal is for kids to love the story line. We need to reach the kids when they're still reachable."

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continues its monthly program of Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration on the third Wednesday of each month. The church will be open for prayer and private worship from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Benediction service in the evening. All in the area are welcome to participate. For details, call (734) 261-1455.

Bethany Suburban West
Monthly Breakfast Meeting 9:30 a.m. Saturday July 19, at Leon's 30149 Ford Road, Garden City. All separated, divorced and singles welcome. Call (734) 513-9479.

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For information, call Mark Lohmeyer at (734) 522-6830.


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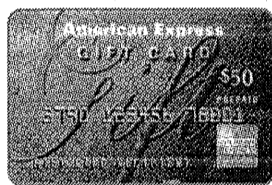
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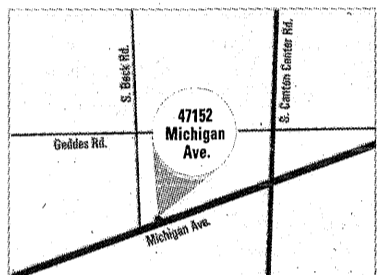
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Vets groups offer flag replacements

BY BRAD KADRICH
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Plymouth and Canton residents who've been wanting to replace tattered or worn-out American flags are getting their chance.

The Vietnam Veterans of America-Chapter 528, partnering with VFW Post 6695, are hosting a flag replacement program Saturday, June 28, that will allow up to 100 flag-bearers to replace old flags with new.

"This is something new we're doing," said Bob Dew, treasurer of the VVA Chapter 528, which represents Plymouth and Canton. "We see a lot of flags flying we think need to be replaced."

The groups have some 100 flags available for the exchange, which takes place

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the VFW Post 6695, 1426 S. Mill (a block north of Ann Arbor Road) in Plymouth.

Members of the two groups will take the old flags and dispose of them properly, Dew said. The replacements were made possible through fundraising efforts among the two groups, he said.

If there are still flags available after the June 28 exchange, Dew said members will go out into the community and, if they see flags that need replacing, will offer replacements to the owners.

"There are a lot of patriotic people in these communities," Dew said. "But we still see flags that maybe should be replaced, and we want to help."

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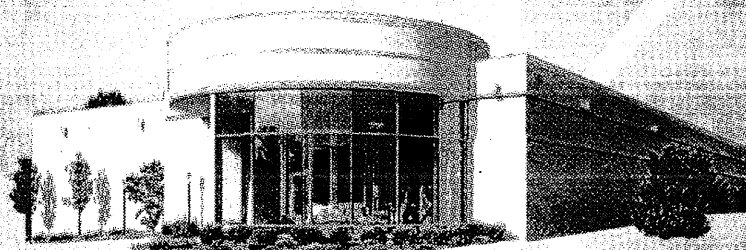
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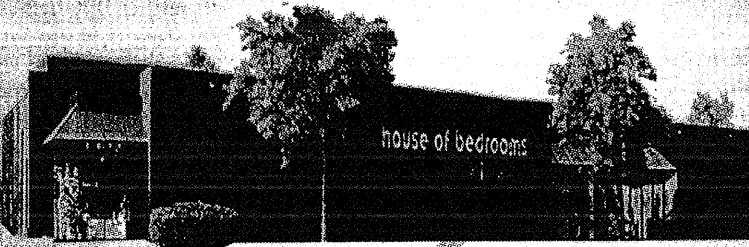
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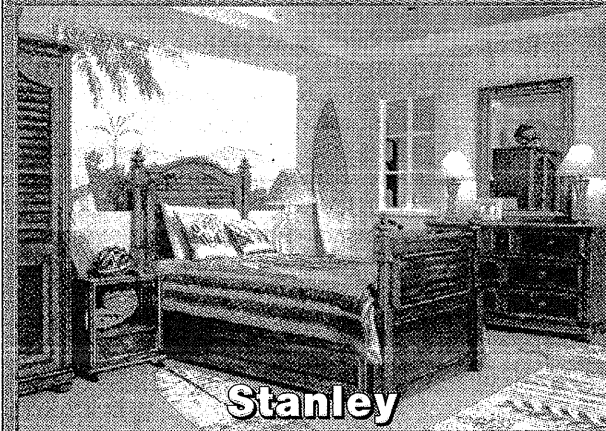
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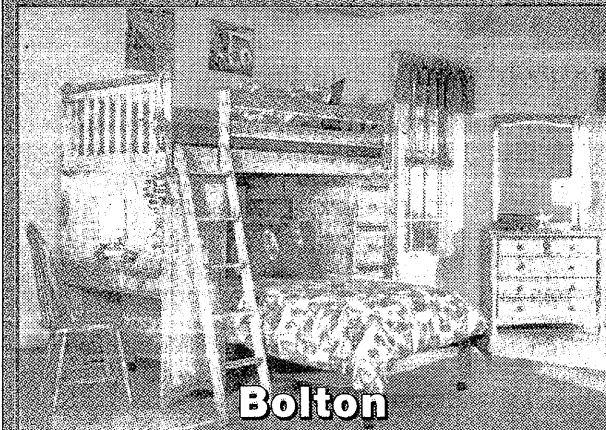
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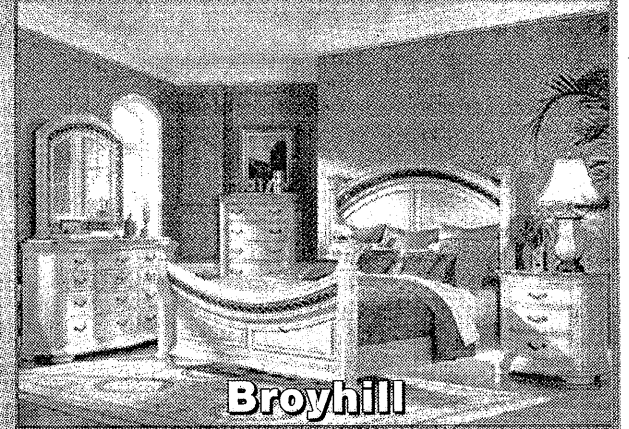
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OUR VIEWS

Concerts embody hometown feeling

There are many things that give the Plymouth community its small-town, hometown feel — festivals and events, the people and the shops, parades and picnics.

Many people seem to feel — and we agree — having a park like Kellogg Park smack in the middle of the downtown is a huge asset. It's the fulcrum for the kind of life-style Plymouth people seem to enjoy.

No time of year is that more apparent than during the summer, when a pair of concert series dominate the schedule. Music in the Park is hosted by the Plymouth Community Arts Council Wednesdays at noon and features music aimed at youngsters.

Sponsored by Main Street Bank, Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M., and Huron Valley Ambulance, the shows feature a variety of entertainment that has kids young and old dancing in the aisles.

PCAC officials estimate some 20,000 people watch these weekly shows, which generally start in mid-June (they started Wednesday, in case you missed it) and run through August. The schedule usually features a couple of newcomers and some old-reliables, such as Guy Louis, elmoThumm and Matt Watroba.

The shows give parents and families time to come down, maybe eat lunch at the burgeoning number of Plymouth restaurants or, better yet, spread a blanket in the park and have a picnic.

The Music in the Air series targets an older audience, but is just as popular. Sponsored by the Plymouth Downtown Development Authority and Blue Cross/Blue Shield, the schedule features music from a variety of genres — from blues to rock, from oldies to bluegrass.

Like the Wednesday concerts, the Music in the Park series provides families a chance to come down for some dinner or maybe a little shopping, then gather for the evening in the park, then maybe take advantage of Plymouth's night life afterward.

If those aren't enough, the Plymouth Community Band, under the direction of Carl Battishill, plays Thursday nights at 8, also in Kellogg Park.

If you've been to any of these concerts, you know how good they are, and should go again.

If you're new in town or haven't taken advantage, you don't know what you're missing.

The shows give parents and families time to come down, maybe eat lunch at the burgeoning number of Plymouth restaurants or, better yet, spread a blanket in the park and have a picnic.

Michigan in summer, always a special place

Michigan is always a great place to spend the summer. In the warm season, Michigan becomes a magical place of yellow sand beaches, deep green forests, sparkling blue lakes and bustling resort towns.

It's a paradise for on-road and off-road bicyclists; canoers, kayakers and speedboaters; trout and bass anglers; antique lovers; sunbathers; golf devotees, no matter what their handicap; fudge fans; bird watchers and woods walkers; and for those who just love to sit by a campfire late at night.

This summer, Michigan should have special appeal for state residents who had been considering trips to ocean shores, mountain parks or other distant destinations. Gasoline prices have gone over the \$4 a gallon threshold and threaten to move closer and closer to \$5. Airlines are also feeling the fuel pinch and are raising fares and surprising fliers with add-ons when they arrive at the airport.

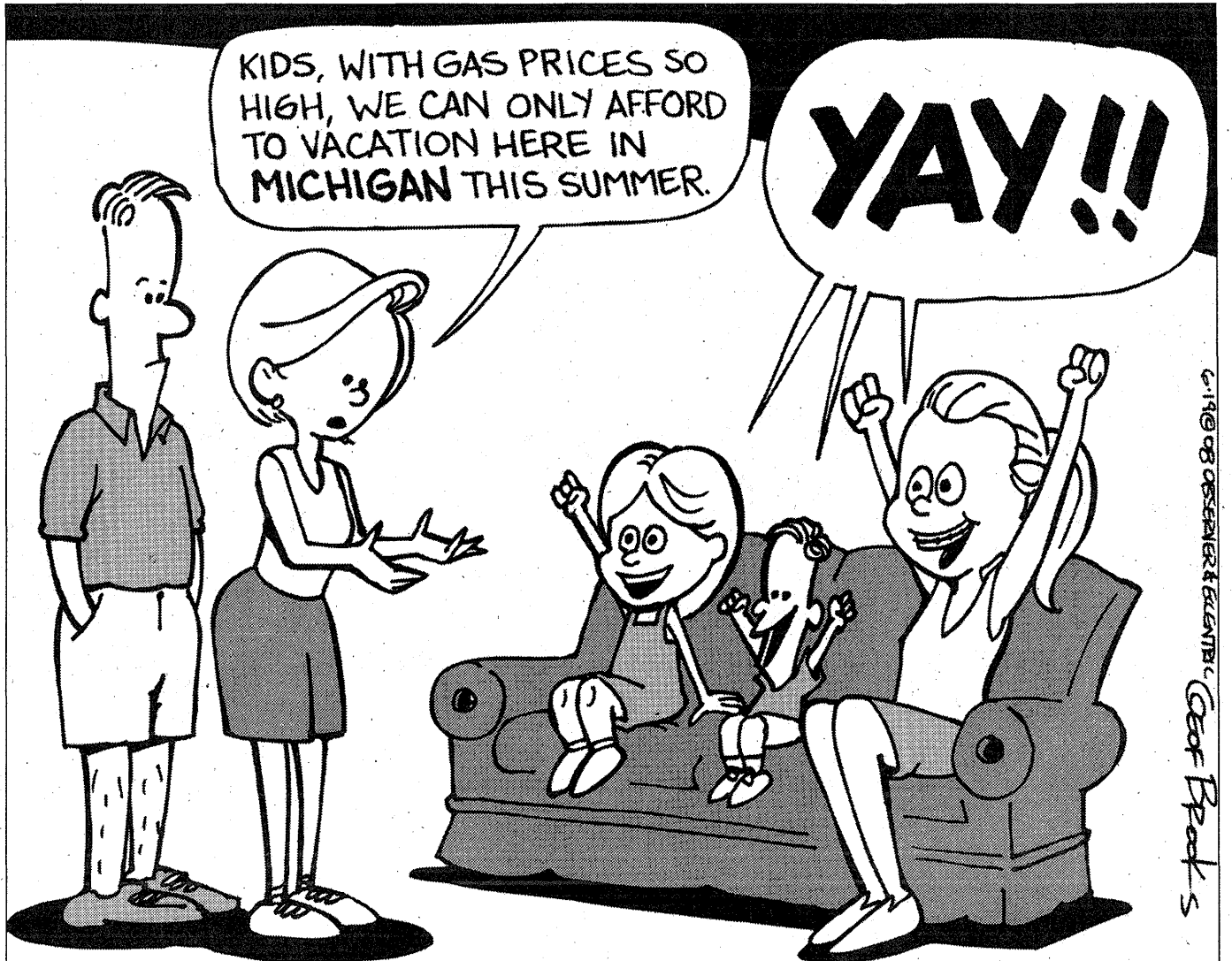
Staying in state will seem like a bargain, and it will be.

Michigan's resorts in the western and northern parts of the state have everything a family needs to enjoy quality time together and to split up and enjoy some quality time alone. There is so much to do and so many options.

But you don't even have to leave town to enjoy a Michigan summer. Our local communities have a variety of recreational activities, musical events and annual festivals. The summer is a great time to get reacquainted with your own hometown and all it has to offer.

Michigan and summer have always been a great combination. This year, it's better than ever.

Michigan's resorts in the western and northern parts of the state have everything a family needs to enjoy quality time together and to split up and enjoy some quality time alone. There is so much to do and so many options.



LETTERS

Applauding LaJoy

I would like to applaud state Rep. Phil LaJoy and his colleagues for their efforts to repeal Michigan's Driver Responsibility Law.

This was initially a well-intentioned, albeit poorly thought-out law designed to raise revenue by penalizing "bad drivers." It was modeled after a New Jersey law and New Jersey ultimately wrote off several hundred million dollars in uncollectible taxes. Michigan's uncollected responsibility fees (taxes) are growing dramatically and only about half of the fees assessed to date have been collected.

Last year, Rep. LaJoy held hearings in his Transportation Committee. This law in effect has been a tax on the poor and those least able to afford it: The number of drivers whose privileges have been suspended has increased by multiples as a result of this law, which has affected many, including employers who need licensed drivers to get to work and those who want to work who are attempting to eke out a living in our faltering economy, but have no transportation.

Unfortunately, revenue sources for governments become addictive. While nearly everyone acknowledges this law is unfair, the question is how do you replace the lost revenue (last year \$111 million)? Rep. LaJoy's bill allows those who currently owe responsibility fees to the state (sometimes thousands of dollars per driver) a window of opportunity wherein they can settle these balances for 50 cents on the dollar, which should generate an influx of revenue to help offset the revenue loss while Michigan tries to get its economy back on track.

Michael J. Gerou
35th District Court judge

Basics of life are changing

As an avid reader of financial news from around the world, especially from European and Asian publications, I have come across three major paradigm changes that are sweeping the world right now that, for some reason or another, are underreported in the American press. These paradigm shifts involve three major aspects of our everyday lives: housing, food and transportation.

Housing: Once seen as a good investment with appreciation potential and tax benefits, homeownership is no longer a good investment. In fact, the view on homeownership seems to be shifting back to the views held in the distant past: a house is a good asset to own if you plan to live in it. Otherwise it is a liability. I think this is particularly true in Canton with its high tax rates, association fees, and water rates.

Food: In the past people in poor countries used to act as shock absorbers for food prices. When food prices inched up, they used to tighten their belts and eat less and/or cheaper food. As someone who grew up in India in the 1970s,

I know this to be true from personal experience.

Not any more. The average real income of the more than two billion Indians and Chinese have grown by more than a 1,000 percent in the past 15 years, and their share of monthly income spent on food has fallen from about 60 percent to less than 25 percent. Their paychecks have more than kept up with food inflation, so they are no longer willing to cut back on food and act as shock absorbers when food prices go up.

Transportation: Again, it is back to the basics. In the past good transportation meant the most efficient way to get from point A to point B. With cheap gas came the gas guzzlers, bells and whistles, and the car as a symbol of our lifestyles. Not any more. With high gas prices, automobiles will once again be judged on how efficiently they get you from point A to point B, as personal automobiles compete with public transportation for cost effectiveness.

Desikan Namookar
Canton

Where's the pride?

I am so conflicted today as I lay in my bed this morning listening to my radio crackle with reports that a threshold historical event has taken place on the soil where slaves and American Indians were victims of our country's domestic holocausts.

I should be bouncing with glee with the realization that Barack Obama will be the first nonwhite viable candidate for president of our country. I know this is a historical moment on so many fronts for the nation.

Yet I am not in a state of euphoria nor do I feel a sense of racial pride that so many in the major media outlets want me to be and of course express in front of their cameras, and on Internet blogs. I should have affirmed all of the religious and symbolic chatter from the pens and throats of our nation's usual civil rights suspects and icons, but I am just not feeling it. I imagine my sense of detachment is based upon my own personal politics which are quite revolutionary. I do understand these laments reflect my refusal to accept and acknowledge that the power of the majority culture is so domineering and persuasive that it can compel an enlighten advocate like Obama appear impotent. Our majority culture is so powerful it can and will castrate any reasonable facsimile of a strong black male.

I guess I am remain offended that our country can not yet accept an Obama that does not genuflect to special interest groups. I must not ignore that today in our nation we can only accept a person of color whose vocal skills and quick foot work echoes the minstrel acts of our torturous past.

So instead of running around with my chest stuck out I must resign myself to

the hard core reality that change in our country will never operate at the speed I observed my father demonstrate when people acted out their contempt for him. I know that despite Obama's inability to be really confront our country's ugly legacies and contemporary shortcomings this is a beginning, a start, a threshold moment.

I just need to get out of my bed, call my friends, yell at the top of my voice, sing some Negro spirituals in the shower. Yet I still lay here ...

Greg Thrasher
Birmingham

Unhealthy fund

The state Senate has cut the Healthy Michigan Fund in half. This fund is composed of tobacco revenues and provides health and prevention of disease programs for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, heart disease, as well as immunizations and other life-saving services.

The Healthy Michigan Fund also saves the state money. For example, early intervention programs can postpone or prevent nursing home placement, and for every Medicaid patient for whom we postpone placement, the state saves over \$50,000 a year. Multiply this by 100 families and the state saves \$5 million. Our senators need to know that cutting the Healthy Michigan Fund makes no sense, loses money for the state and plays havoc with the health of our citizens.

Dian Wilkins
Beverly Hills

Good average

A recent study found the average American walks about 900 miles a year. Another study found Americans drink, on average, 22 gallons of alcohol a year. That means, on average, Americans get about 41 miles to the gallon. Damn, we're good! Makes you proud to be an American.

Mari Squire
Westland

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 district is in good shape, we don't seem to be missing a beat ... He's provided quality leadership and implemented a very collaborative team effort in addressing the district's issues. He's brought new energy to the job ... and he's been a stimulus for his team to step up and be more accountable."

— Barry Simescu, Plymouth-Canton Board of Education Vice President, on the performance of interim Superintendent Ken Jacobs

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

Don't factor Social Security into retirement equation

A few weeks ago on my radio show I had a discussion regarding retirement planning. A man who was in his early 50s wanted to retire in a couple of years. The issue was did he have enough to enjoy a comfortable retirement? After reviewing his current cost of living and what it would cost to live in retirement, he was convinced he could retire in a couple of years. However, there were two issues I raised that made him think twice. The perks his employer had paid for and the future of Social Security.

When someone looks at what it's going to cost in retirement he/she starts with what it presently costs them to live and uses that as a base. In most situations, people assume there would be fewer expenses in retirement.

COST OF WORK

The general consensus is there is a cost to go to work. I agree. In most cases not going to work does lower some costs, but not always and in this case, it wasn't.

It turns out the individual who wants to retire in a couple of years receives a variety of perks from his employer including cell phone, Internet connection, automobile and insurance.

He didn't factor this into whether he can retire.

The other issue is Social Security. In this case, the plan for retirement is predicated on being able to receive Social Security. My question to him is: What happens if you don't receive Social Security? His answer is without Social Security he can't retire in his early 50s.

This issue is difficult to resolve and one that should be of concern to many individuals. The government has made certain promises to us regarding Social Security, however, the reality is we have no idea what the future will bring. Because of that, I do not factor Social Security into the equation.

The individual who is a few years away from collecting Social Security or who is presently collecting Social Security, should have no worries. However, people who are at least a decade away from receiving benefits can expect changes. If I am wrong, all that means is more money to live on during retirement.

ALTER PLANS

My advice in this man's case is to change his plans and not retire in the next couple of years. I have no idea what the future of Social Security is, however, I am confident there will be significant changes that will impact benefits. Because of this great unknown and because I want to be safe, not sorry, my advice for most people is don't depend upon Social Security.

I don't mean to frighten people, but facts are facts. Social Security has been so mismanaged over the decades, that as baby boomers enter retirement, more changes will be necessary. What those changes are is anyone's guess but change is coming.

The individual who is a few years away from collecting Social Security or who is presently collecting Social Security, should have no worries. However, people who are at least a decade away from receiving benefits can expect changes. If I am wrong, all that means is more money to live on during retirement.

The bottom line is you and I are responsible for our own retirement and it is important to plan. For those in your late 40s and early 50s who are beginning to do some retirement planning, my advice is don't factor Social Security into the equation or deeply discount it.

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. Observer & Eccentric readers can submit questions at money-matters@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.



Money Matters

Rick Bloom

Gas savings plan fails to pump up governor's office

Gas, as I write this, \$4.19 at my neighborhood station, and it has dropped the \$50 credit card limit on the pump. This is getting plenty serious.

Fortunately, there is somebody taking a common-sense approach to the problem: Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson. A month ago, he proposed voluntary rescheduling for county employees so they'd work four days a week, 10 hours a day. That would allow them to save a day's worth of gas.

Last week, the Oakland County Commission unanimously approved the idea: "By allowing employees to work four 10-hour days, it will save them 20 percent on their commute costs and ease the financial pinch of filling up their cars," a press release from Patterson's office proclaimed.

When I talked with him last week, Brooks was enthusiastic. "Look, we've got about 4,000 county employees. If 1,500 employees take the four-day week, a conservative estimate is they'd save two gallons of gas not commuting the fifth day. At \$4 gallon, that's eight bucks a week for one employee, or \$12,000 a week for all 1,500. "Over a year, that adds up in a hurry."

Patterson says the idea first emerged while "some of us were kicking around the big rise in gas prices" several months ago. "We thought about what we could do to ease the financial pressure on our employees, and this seemed a pretty sensible way to go about it."

What about scheduling so county offices remain staffed?

True, "we have to work out the schedules, but that's doable," Patterson says. (Jobs that require round-the-clock staffing, such as sheriff's deputies, won't be eligible for the four-day week.)

What about the public employee unions? Do you have to re-negotiate your labor contracts? I wanted to know. Evidently not.

"This program is voluntary and it's pretty popular. If the unions wanted to challenge it, they'd be hard-pressed. We'll probably have to sit down and talk, but I don't see a big problem."

Patterson says he's been contacted by "hundreds" of businesses in Oakland County interested in trying the same idea. "This is something that all local government units should be trying. It should spread all across the state."

With that in mind, I called Liz Boyd, Gov. Jennifer Granholm's press secretary, to see if state government was interested in following

Patterson says he's been contacted by "hundreds" of businesses in Oakland County interested in trying the same idea. "This is something that all local government units should be trying. It should spread all across the state."

suit. Her response: "The governor met with her cabinet within the past three weeks on this idea. We want to help state employees with gas prices. More than one-third of state employees already work on flexible schedules, including a four-day week."

"Right now we're compiling information." Hmmm. Doesn't sound like adopting a gas-saving plan is uppermost in the minds of the Granholm administration.

I tried — and failed — to get the governor's spokeswoman to be more specific. Yet the potential for savings is very large, indeed. When you figure there are around 53,000 state employees, the math adds up pretty quickly. Adopting Patterson's assumptions, if 37 percent of all state employees adopt the program, that's 19,875.

Multiply that by two gallons (\$8) a week, and you get nearly \$160,000 in annual gas savings for state employees.

That's at \$4 a gallon, mind you, and prices are already past that barrier and marching north. Still — that sum is a tidy number, and one that certainly should excite the attention of an employer who's interested in helping out beleaguered state employees.

What about state public employee unions? Would a four-day work week require re-negotiating labor contracts with the unions? Alas, the governor's press secretary didn't want to talk about that.

So I don't know whether the Granholm administration is seriously working on Patterson's common-sense idea.

But I do know that a voluntary four-day work week saves financially strapped workers money they would have to spend on gas. And that seems to meet the "let's do something simple and practical" test that all public bodies should have on top of their minds.

Some do. And, evidently, some sadly don't.

Phil Power is founder and president of The Center for Michigan, a think tank based in Ann Arbor. The opinions expressed here are Power's and do not represent the official views of The Center. Reader comments are welcome at power@thecenterformichigan.net.



Phil Power

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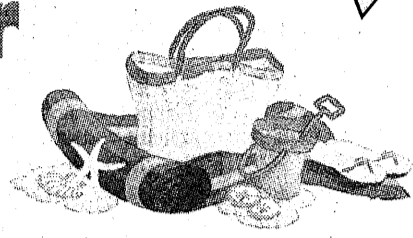
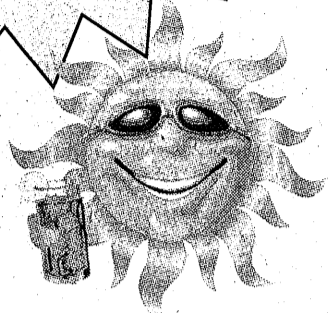
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SPORTS

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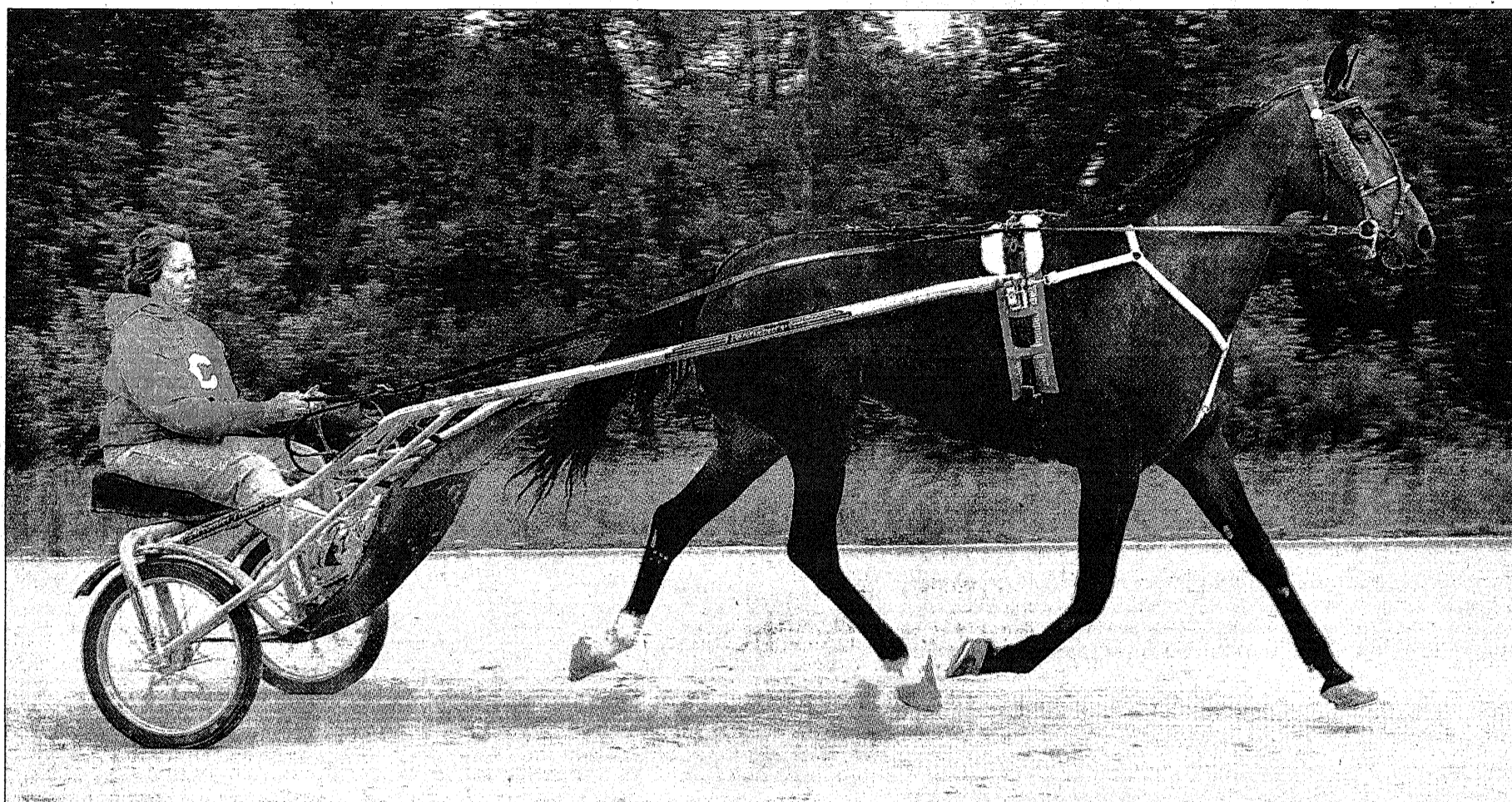
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Thursday, June 19, 2008

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

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

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PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Corinne Flis exercises Carli Dey Tuesday afternoon at Perfecta Farms. The horse is one of four owned and trained by Flis that race approximately once a week at one of three harness tracks in the metropolitan Detroit area.

Sidelines

Field hockey camp

Livonia Ladywood will be hosting a one-day field hockey camp June 28 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the school, which is located on Newburgh Road between Schoolcraft and Five Mile.

The purpose of the camp is to introduce the sport to future high school players and promote enthusiasm for the game. An emphasis will be placed on learning the basic fundamentals of the game and teaching proper techniques of the skill sets used to play, including dribbling, driving, shooting, passing and stopping.

The cost of the camp is \$50.

Campers will need to bring shin guards, a mouth piece, a water bottle and a sack lunch. Rubber cleats are recommended and sticks will be available to sign out at camp.

Registration forms can be printed off www.ladywood.org.

Hole-in-one

Gene Kornegay of Plymouth aceed the second hole on the Fox Hills Lakes layout recently.

The 67-year-old Kornegay used a four iron to find the cup on his first shot on the 163-yard hole. He fired a 95 for the round.

Suvoy fund-raiser

There will be a fund-raiser June 26 at Joey's Comedy Club, located at 36071 Plymouth Road in Livonia, to help support the family of Bobby Suvoy, who passed away May 6 at the age of 16 following a short but courageous battle with Lou Gehrig's Disease.

Tickets are \$15 per person and there is a \$5 drink or food minimum per person.

For more information or to purchase tickets, contact Plymouth Whalers Sales and Marketing Administrator Natalie Shaver at (734) 453-8400 or natalies@plymouthwhalers.com.



HARNESSING HORSE POWER

Plymouth owner/trainer excels at helping ponies reach their potential

BY ED WRIGHT
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Unless there's a nice breeze blowing from the south, Corinne Flis' "office" doesn't have air-conditioning, but she's not complaining.

Working a 365-day-a-year schedule, Flis is required to feed her "employees" at least three square meals a day, bathe them and take them for long runs — whether it's a comfortable 65 degrees out like it was Tuesday afternoon, or a bone-chilling 17 degrees, like it is on many a February morning in southeastern Michigan.

To top it all off, Flis drives her employees to and from their work — and she loves every minute of it. The Plymouth Township resi-

dent's job is unique, time-consuming and sometimes challenging, but it's one she wouldn't trade for all of Quaker's oats.

Flis is the owner and trainer of four harness race horses that reside at Perfecta Farms in Plymouth Township. They race year-round — usually once a week — at either Northville Downs, Hazel Park Raceway or Windsor Raceway.

"Probably the best part about it is working directly with the horses in the barn," said Flis, who has trained horses for over 25 years. "After a while, they become like your family pet. You're not supposed to get attached to them, but it's hard not to."

'Probably the best part about it is working directly with the horses in the barn. After a while, they become like your family pet. You're not supposed to get attached to them, but it's hard not to.'

CORINNE FLIS



Above, Corinne Flis is pictured with 4-year-old Little Orphan Andy, who she raised from a malnourished pony into a multi-time winner. At right, Flis gives Little Orphan Andy a bath after his exercise.

Plymouth 'Y' hosts 'Father' of all 10Ks

BY ED WRIGHT
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Fathers may know best, but they didn't know *rest* on Sunday morning — at least the ones who competed in the 29th Annual Plymouth YMCA Father's Day Run.

Hundreds of dads, moms, sons and daughters bared their "soles" on the streets of Plymouth for the yearly series of races that includes everything from a leisurely one-mile walk to the challenging "MDG Triple Race," which requires runners to complete one-mile, 5K and 10K races back-to-back.

Lansing's Jerome Recker was the daddy of all runners on Sunday as he not only captured the coveted "Triple" title with a clocking of 55:39, but he won each of the shorter races as well.

Recker crossed first in the mile in 4:39, broke the tape in the 5K in 16:45 before capping a perfect morning with a 34:15 in the 10K.

Canton resident Sarah Shipley earned gold in the women's "Triple" with a time of 1 hour, 17 minutes and 20 seconds.

Two other locals — Christine Hughes of Canton and Corynne Johnson of Plymouth — finished in the top 10 in the ladies' "Triple." Fenton's Lisa Veneziano placed

first in both the women's one-mile run (5:48) and the 10K (40:11).

Canton resident Rebecca McCormack won the women's 5K in 18:32.

This year's race was enhanced by the presence of world-renowned long-distance runner Doug Kurtis of Northville, who holds world records for most career sub-2:20 marathons (76) and most marathon victories (40).

In 1994, at the age of 42, Kurtis won the Boston Marathon Masters Division with a clocking of 2:15.47.

The 55-year-old Kurtis claimed

Please see **RUN, B2**



Charlie and Brian Anderson of Plymouth run side by side in Sunday's 29th Annual Plymouth YMCA Father's Day Run.

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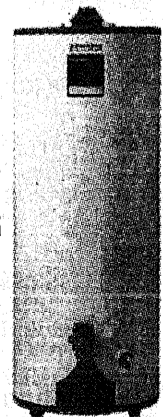
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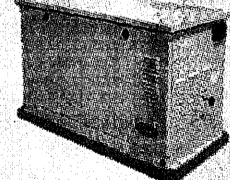
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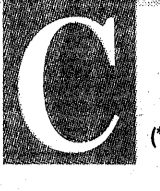
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The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers
Julie Brown, editor . (734) 953-2111 . jcbrown@hometownlife.com

Thursday, June 19, 2008
www.hometownlife.com

Historic preservation doesn't always mean 'ancient'

BY JULIE BROWN
O&E STAFF WRITER

When you hear "historic preservation," you might think of buildings from the early 1900s or even before.

Structures are usually considered historic if they're 50 years or older, said Finegood, who lived in Oak Park for 30 years in a home that now qualifies.

One such local effort was the recent renovation of downtown Plymouth's Penn Theatre, which opened in 1941 and is now still in use as a theater.

If you're interested in learning more about historic preservation, you can call (517) 371-8080 or e-mail the Michigan Historic Preservation Network at info@mhpn.org



This home on Townsend in Birmingham is in that city's historic district.

runs the theater and shows current second run movies, independent films, classic film festivals, and occasional live musical performances.

Finegood of the Lansing-based MHPN sees a lot of interest in historic preservation, including Detroit and Grand Rapids in particular. People realize older buildings are often "green" with better construction and insulation.

States like Virginia and Kansas have done the best in federal and state tax credits to encourage preservation, she said. In Michigan for commercial projects, you must use the federal credit first and receive only 5 percent state credit compared to a full 25 percent state credit.

"We're starting to see more activity," Finegood said. There's a 25 percent tax credit from the state if your home's in a local historic district.

"I think the ethic is changing," Finegood said. She hesitates to use "cool cities" which has been much-quoted, but notes young people like places like San Francisco and similar environments closer to home.

"They're not looking for the cool and modern. I think that ethic is starting to grow in Michigan." A boost to home values in historic districts is also a factor, she said.

If you're interested in learning more about historic preservation, you can call (517) 371-8080 or e-mail



This Warren Court home is found in Birmingham's historic district.

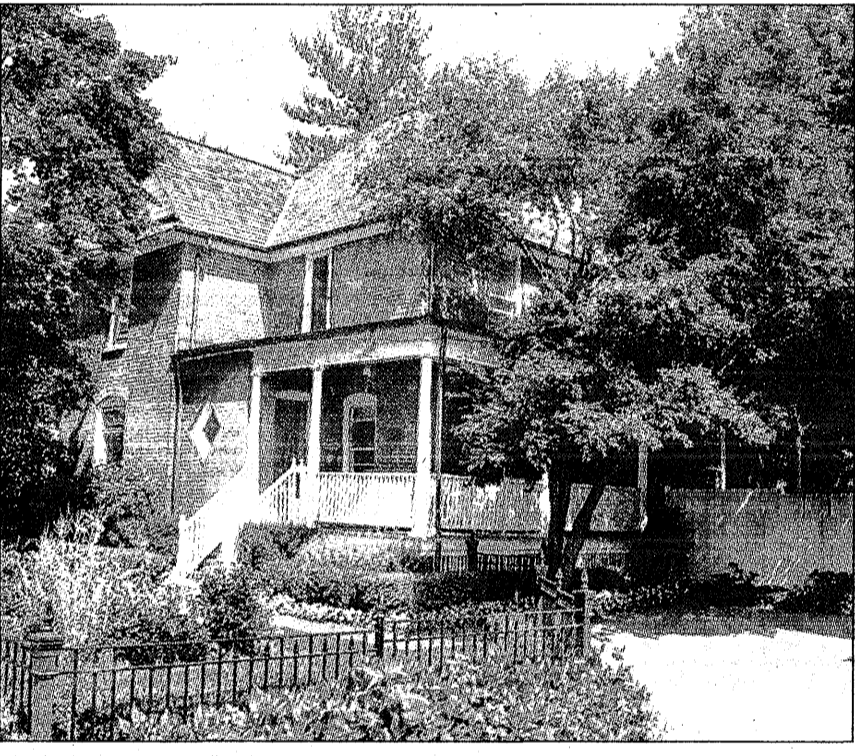
the Michigan Historic Preservation Network at info@mhpn.org to schedule a workshop or workshop series.

"It's definitely hands-on," Finegood said of practical preservation workshops where participants wield hammers and other tools while working on buildings in need of work.

The network also offers training for historic district commissioners, and teaches about easements and assessments.

"We'll talk about anything you like," she said. "We travel the whole state." The network has a field representative for southeast Michigan, and is hiring someone for the western and northern state, including the Upper Peninsula.

Founded in 1981, the MHPN was initially a group of people interested in protecting historic districts. With the addition of dedicated staff members and use of a work plan strategy,



Birmingham's historic district includes this home on Townsend.

MHPN transformed itself into an educational and advocacy organization, offering programs for beginning and veteran preservationists.

More specialized efforts have also emerged, including partnering with the national Partners for Sacred Places program to guide congrega-

tions in the preservation and restoration of their historic houses of worship.

"We teach them how to fund raise like a nonprofit would," Finegood said. The network is involved with 22

Please see HISTORIC, C4

Designation reveals training, standards

Q. We are in the process of retaining a property manager and I am wondering what designation NBC-CAM means on their letterhead?

A. NBC-CAM means National Board of Certification for Community Association Managers. NBC-CAM has a program of community association managers that are provided training and expertise in the community association field.



I am advised that many state legislatures are considering incorporating credentialing licensing programs that would utilize the CMCA program as a measurement of assurance that community managers are qualified and capable in all major knowledge areas of community association management.

Q: I am a member of the Board of Directors of my condominium association and I spend most of my winters in Florida. I want to participate in winter board meetings, but I do not like to travel for the meetings or vote by proxy.

A: The Michigan Legislature has recently amended the Non-Profit Corporation Act to include provisions authorizing certain actions by means of "electronic transmission" and/or "remote communication" if such actions are otherwise permitted by the articles of incorporation and/or bylaws.

HOMES SOLD

These are the Observer & Eccentric-area residential real-estate closings recorded the week of March 3-7, 2008, at the Wayne County Register of Deeds office, plus some from Oakland County.

Table with columns: Address, Sale Price. Includes Farmington Hills, Garden City, Livonia.

Table with columns: Address, Sale Price. Includes Farmington Hills, Milford, Northville, Novi.

Table with columns: Address, Sale Price. Includes Farmington Hills, Plymouth, Redford, South Lyon, Westland.

Robert M. Meisner is a lawyer and the author of Condominium Operation: Getting Started & Staying on the Right Track, second edition.



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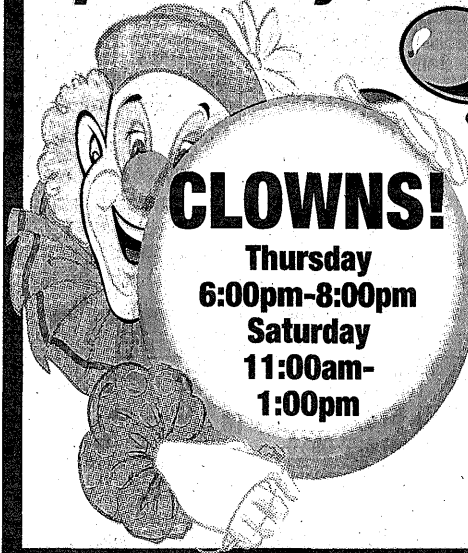
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<p>NEW UP TO 20 MILES PER GALLON 2008 FORD EXPLORER XLT 4X2 \$179[*] per mo. \$2,063 Due At Signing</p>	<p>CERTIFIED ROUSH DEALER Great Selection of Roush High-Performance Vehicles in Stock!</p> <p>\$750 EXTRA FOR YOUR TRADE 1998 or newer with less than 100,000 miles. One coupon per customer. Good thru 6-30-08. All prior sales excluded.</p>	

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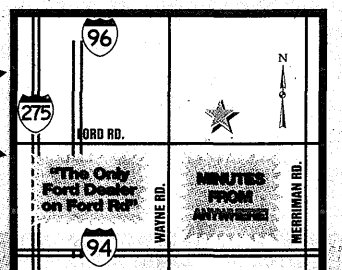
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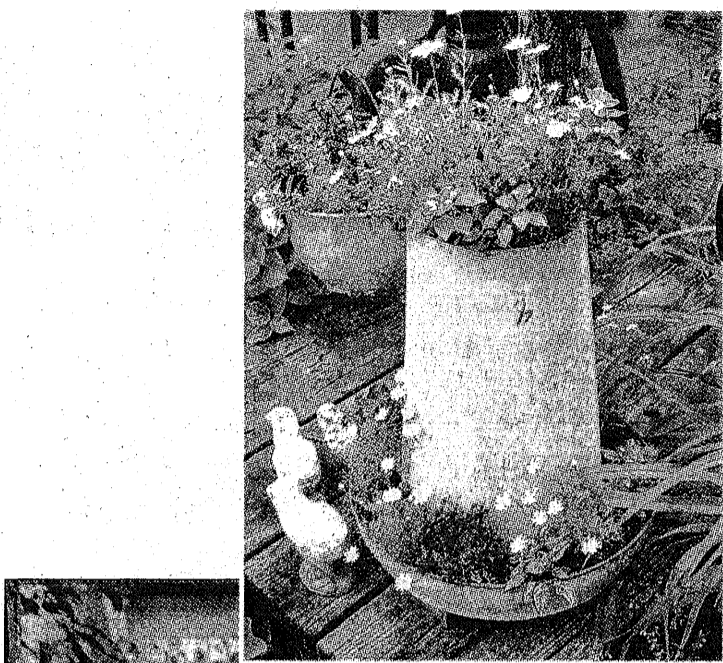


**A, X, Z & D plan not eligible. Expires 6-30-08. Up to \$500 max. payment. *Cash due at signing includes first months payment, acquisition fee, waived security deposit; excludes title, taxes, and license fees. Payments based on 24 mo. 12,000 low mileage red carpet lease. Ford credit financing required. Must take delivery out of dealer stock by 6/30/08. See dealer for details. MPG estimate based on 2008 Focus 2.0L, 2008 Escape 2.3L I4, 2008 Fusion 2.3L I4, 2008 Edge 3.5L V6, 2008 F-150 5.4L V8. Residency restrictions apply. All payments are for AZ plan customers and eligible family members. Payments may vary; dealer determines prices. Not all lessees will qualify. +Holidays excluded. OE08608397

ACCENTS

Glamorous gardens

gardens



PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Pat Ribar works in her garden, one of seven on the Flowers are Forever garden walk in Plymouth June 24. Above, an antique chicken feeder is now a planter.

Plymouth, other walks extol summer's blooms

BY KEN ABRAMCZYK
O & E STAFF WRITER

Pat Ribar loves phlox because they are "tall, showy and quite fragrant," she says.

She enjoys zinnias and valarium. Her favorite colors are red and yellow. "I like a bright blast of color," she said. "I like fragrant things that sprout seeds. Everything has to grow by itself."

Pat and Steve Ribar's yard is a slice of Plymouth's "country," one of seven on the Trailwood Garden Club's 13th annual Flowers are Forever garden walk June 24.

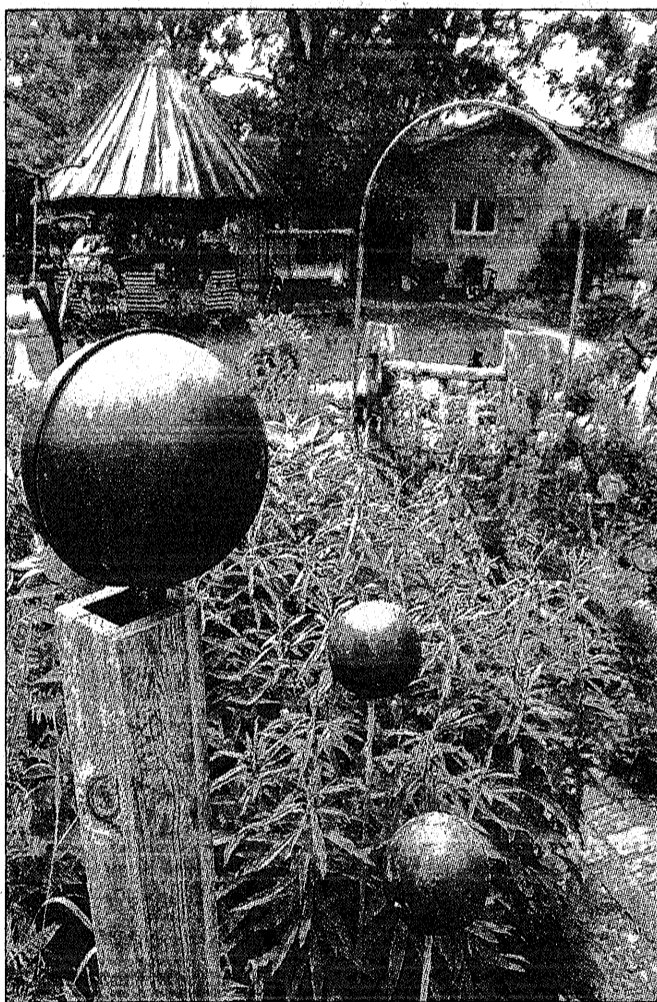
Visitors can expect to be surprised by the Ribar's three-story barn, pond and natural gardens, all tucked into a downtown city lot.

Winding brick and stone paths lead to patches of

ferns, lilies, coneflowers and grasses.

The Ribars use a former corn crib for a gazebo. A windmill stand (without the windmill) will be draped

Please see GARDEN, D2



Antiques decorate the gardens at Pat and Steve Ribar's home.

LOCAL GARDEN WALKS

June marks the end of the school year and the beginning of summer. It's also garden season, a time of year when gardeners reap seeds sown and seedlings planted, inviting the public into their yards at local garden walks.

You probably live near one of the scores of garden walks offered from now through August. Most are scheduled in late June.

Here is a schedule:
Rochester Hills Museum Garden Tour

Seven gardens ranging from small lots surrounding historic homes to sprawling gardens in Oakland Township, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. June 19. Guests can tour the Museum Dairy Barn, enjoy exhibits, children's garden and historic plantings surrounding the 1840 Van Hoosen Farmhouse and refreshments. Tickets are \$8 in advance for museum members, \$10 for

Please see WALKS, D2

COMPO AWARDED

James D. Compo, a Farmington Hills-based custom builder and remodeler, was awarded the 2008 Energy Star grant for southeast Michigan.

David Compo, president, said every Compo custom home features a 5-Star energy-efficiency package.

"Staying abreast of the energy-saving technology developments and incorporating them in our homes has been a priority in our company for years," Compo said. "Our continual commitment to energy efficiency played a key role in our being selected for this much coveted grant. We are proud to be able to provide our customers with a home that conserves energy and saves them money year after year."

In addition to receiving the Energy Star Grant, Compo also won the 2008 Blue Ribbon Award for Home Design from the Building Industry Association of SE Michigan (BIA) for their new model in Northville, the Dawson II. This home included many step-up features.

Compo also was awarded 4 Sales & Marketing Awards from the BIA, including Best Web site, two Best Interior Merchandising awards, and Best Broker/Realtor event, which was held at The Whitney.

James D. Compo, Inc. has been designing, building, and remodeling custom homes since the company was formed in 1961. The Compo family business, now in its third generation, looks forward to providing unique residential building solutions to the metro Detroit market for years to come.

Visit online at www.jdcompo.com or call (248) 474-0499.

ASH BORER TIPS

Homeowners, commercial property owners and municipalities can catch a video highlighting efforts to control the emerald ash borer on the newly launched Web site www.TreeResearch.org.

The video is hosted by Dave Roberts, specialist and district horticulture agent with Michigan State University Extension, who first identified the emerald ash borer in 2002. The video provides details about the signs and diagnosis of EAB, as well as an overview of chemicals and fertilizers used to successfully treat ash trees.

Southeastern Michigan arborists demonstrate the procedures for the survival and recovery of ash trees. They explain the most effective method is to utilize trunk injections that do not require drilling since the holes permanently damage a tree's ability to move nutrients.

The recommended action, as shown in the video, is for annual applications of the pesticide imidacloprid in areas with heavy infestations and in the curative stages and the use of it every other year in preventive situations.

Pointer, an Imidacloprid product from ArborSystems that is labeled by the EPA for two-year control, is used along with various fertilizers and root stimulants to keep trees as healthy as possible.

For more information, visit www.TreeResearch.org.

FLOWERS ARE FOREVER

What: 13th annual garden walk of the Trailwood Garden Club, featuring seven gardens.

When: Noon-8 p.m. June 24, rain or shine.

Tickets: \$8 presale; \$10 day of the walk. Available from Garden Club members; Backyard Birds, 627 S. Main, Plymouth; and Saxton's Garden Center, 587 W. Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth.

For information about the walk, call (734) 454-4625.



Tech Savvy

Rick Broida

All manuals on the site are stored in PDF format, so you should be able to view them on Macs,

PCs, and even most smartphones.

If you have some user guides of your own that aren't in the directory, you can upload them and they'll be preserved for future reference (and shared with other users).

A couple weeks ago I mentioned FixYa (fixya.com) as a great destination for getting tech help from fellow users. SafeManuals deserves a bookmark right below it.

Question: What's a wiki, and why should I care?

Answer: A wiki is a batch of Web pages containing custom content that you and/or others can edit at will. By far the most prominent example is Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia written and edited by everyday

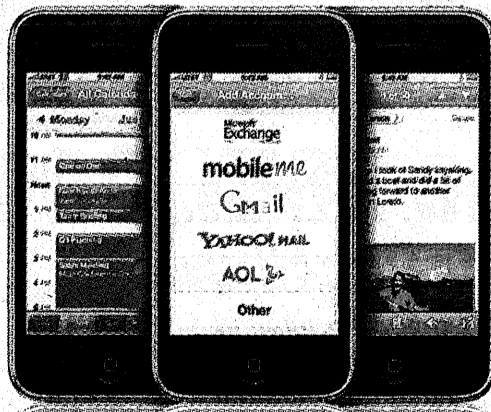
people.

But you can also use a wiki as a kind of personal online filing cabinet, one that's great for keeping track of notes, ideas, links, and other information.

For example, I've got a wiki page called "house stuff." It contains notes about home repairs we've had done (dates, contractor names and numbers, etc.), quotes we've received, and so on.

Another page, "Patio table," details my attempt to get warranty service on a table. It has the contact info of the manufacturer's customer-service rep, the dates and details of our conversations, and even a scanned image

Please see TECH, D3



The new iPhone may be cheaper, but it'll actually cost you more over the course of your two-year contract. Buy one anyway.

Replace lost manuals, create a wiki, and explore the new iPhone

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PURE ENTERTAINMENT!

Thursday, June 19, 2008

**Jazz takes
root in
Southfield**

www.hometownlife.com

**Groves students cast in Lifetime movie
Royal Oak Clay & Glass
Rochester Late Nite Thursdays**

'Jazz on the Grass' celebrates the community

BY LANA MINI
O&E STAFF WRITER

The sound of smooth jazz is a gift to the community from the administrators at Family Victory Fellowship Church in Southfield.

Every year, thousands of people come to sit on the lawn and enjoy Jazz on the Grass, a free concert that features instrumental-only jazz.

"This concert lets people hear local artists who are nationally known," said Terrance Goff, event director. "It's a way for us to meet new members of the com-

munity and mingle with (church members)."

And although the concert is free, there are auctions with high-end ticket items like couture, Lions tickets, gas cards and more.

The goal is to raise money for scholarships for local kids.

Jazz on

the Grass, now in its fourth year, will feature a full jazz ensemble plus solo performances by saxophonist Randy Scott, guitarist Tim Bowman and bass player Terrance Palmer.

Bowman is known for classical and gospel-inspired jazz. Scott is a three-time winner of the nationally televised, "It's Showtime At The Apollo," and the Cognac Hennessy Jazz Search.

Palmer has toured the world and played with popular jazz gospel performers including Marvin Winans, Fred Hammond and Kirk Franklin.

Jazz ensemble Zamar Instruments of Praise is a contemporary band.

"All the musicians are very skilled and help create a very nice mood at the festival," Goff said.

Spear-headed by church founding pastor Larry Jordan and administrative pastor Sylvia Jordan, Jazz on the Grass is sponsored by Generation 2 Generation — a program that works to promote literacy and bridge generation gaps between the young and mature.

"The goal is to help each generation understand and respect each other," Goff said.

Food vendors will be on site along the Merchants Row where guests can stroll an outdoor book store, jewelry vendors and more.

JAZZ ON THE GRASS

What: Fourth annual concert

When: Friday, June 20, 6:30-11 p.m.

Where: Family Victory Fellowship Church on 10 Mile Road and Evergreen in Southfield

Performing: All instrumentalists of smooth jazz including metro Detroiters guitarist Tim Bowman; saxophonist Randy Scott (on the cover); jazz ensemble Zamar Instruments of Praise; and bass guitarist Terrance Palmer.

Admission: Free. Donations accepted to benefit G2G scholarship funds

Cover story



Jazz guitarist Paul J. Miles will perform on the streets in Rochester.

Thursdays in Rochester are a whole new vibe

BY LANA MINI
O&E STAFF WRITER

Oh, it's so New York. It's so European.

Shopping trendy or fine shops and enjoying the sounds of strolling musicians. Musicians wandering in and out of the stores, and standing on the street corners — there to give you the gift of music to make your night more interesting.

Downtown Rochester will host Late Night Thursdays beginning tonight, June 19, and every Thursday through Aug. 28 from 6 to 9 p.m. or later.

Stores will stay open late and offer special sales, while restaurants offer interesting dishes and musicians entertain.

"This is an event that will evolve as the summer goes on," said Rochester Downtown Development Authority events coordinator Stacey Keast. "Some weeks we may have music, other weeks there will be different street entertainment. It will always be something unique."

This Thursday, June 19, it's bluesman guitarist Paul J. Miles — you may actually see him wandering in and out of the shops performing his jazz music.

Miles is a well-established musician who will also perform on Saturday Aug. 2 in downtown Rochester's Farmer's Market. And on June 28 he's at the Woods Gallery Art Fair.

His blues style is influenced by James Brown, Jimi Hendrix, Richie Havens, Lightning Hopkins, B.B. King, Taj Mahal and Keb Mo'. He's the winner of Detroit Music Awards and performs at places like Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit, and many big festivals.

Also Late Nite Thursday shoppers can participate in the "Summer in the City" scavenger hunt for a chance to win nearly \$2,000 in prizes. Visit the "Summer in the City" window at 431 Main Street to view a display full of prize items donated from participating Downtown Rochester merchants.

"Summer is already a great time to shop downtown thanks to the weather and longer daylight, but with extended hours, a touch of atmosphere and some hot prizes, it will become a weekly destination for couples, friends and families alike," Keast said.

Downtown Rochester is home to more than 200 shops, salons and restaurants. And, 85 percent are owned by independent merchants.

Downtown Rochester is located north of Avon Road and south of University Road.

On the town

Aspiring actors to share screen with Sigourney Weaver

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
O&E STAFF WRITER

For recent Groves High School graduate Shannon Eagen, starting a sentence with “I was talking to Sigourney the other day” has become a common occurrence. The 17-year-old was among five students at the Beverly Hills school cast in the Lifetime Original Movie *Prayers for Bobby*, alongside star Sigourney Weaver.

Anna Badalamenti, Spencer Perrenoud, Allyson Rupe and Hillary Sussman also made the cut. More than a month ago Groves theater teacher John Rutherford was contacted by friend and Southfield-based casting agent Janet Pound to find non-lead actors and extras for the film. With barely any notice the students scrambled to write resumes and have their headshots taken in time for the audition. But the effort proved worthy as eight students earned call-backs and more than 30 were cast as extras.

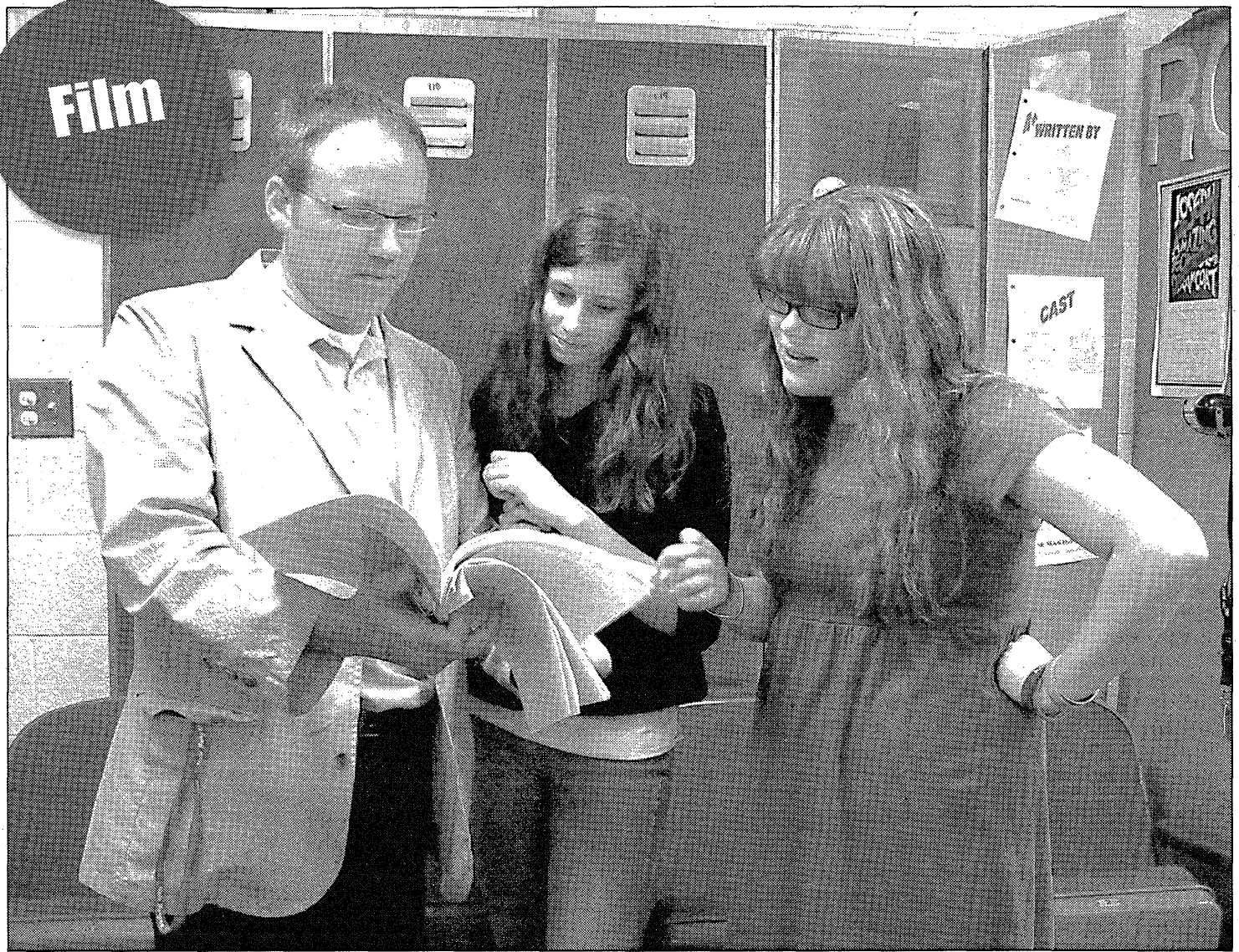
The film follows Mary Griffith (Weaver) as a mother whose failure to accept her son Bobby’s homosexuality leads to his suicide. The story is based upon a book by Leroy Aarons and it’s set in the early ‘80s. Russell Mulcahy (*Resident Evil: Extinction*, *Queer as Folk*) is directing.

Eagen, who portrays the title character’s younger sister Nancy and one of Mary’s three children, has been shooting three days a week since late May. Her first meeting with star of *Aliens* and *Ghostbusters* involved a read-through at Birmingham’s Townsend Hotel. “Even just seeing her reading her lines with so much emotion, I was so impressed,” said Eagen. “I felt honored to be acting with her.” She has also bonded with Carly Schroeder (*Lizzie McGuire*), her on-camera sister.

Badalamenti had already wrapped her role — as Bobby’s girlfriend. Her first scene, filmed on Drayton Street in Ferndale, involved on-camera kissing. “It was my first movie and I had to makeout on my first day,” she said. “And he’s 21.” The long day of shooting, from 4:30 p.m. to 2 a.m., culminated in that scene. It only took three takes, she said, “which is pretty good for a movie.”

Rupe initially didn’t receive a call-back for her role as one of Bobby’s friends. So when she discovered she got a part anyway it caused a lot of excitement at home. Rupe said her mother “called everyone we knew. It was really embarrassing.” Soon enough, Rupe found herself donning an authentic-looking *Rocky Horror Picture Show* costume, starkly resembling Magenta. In the scene she and another friend (ala Dr. Frankenfurter) arrive at Bobby’s house to pick him up for the movie, and catch him and his mother in a volatile argument. Rupe said it felt awkward to sit in the set living room and hear the fight offscreen — an emotion that fit her character and the scene perfectly.

At press time Perrenoud had yet to film



Groves High School teacher John Rutherford and two of his students, Anna Badalamenti and Allyson Rupe, talk over the script for a Lifetime Original Movie, “Prayers for Bobby,” currently being filmed in Oakland County. Five Groves students were cast and the film stars Sigourney Weaver.

EDITOR’S NOTE

This is the first in a recurring series of stories highlighting the hometown impact of a newly-passed 2008 Michigan tax incentive on a now burgeoning local film industry in and around metro Detroit. The incentives offer up to a 42 percent cash rebate as long as the production spends \$50,000 in Michigan. As a result more than 90 inquiries have been submitted to the Michigan Film Office to date.

his scene, a pivotal and emotional one that takes place at the end of the film. He has no lines but must hug Weaver and cry on cue. Without much other information about his character, Perrenoud said he’ll craft a backstory for the character on his own, imagining the boy had “a similar upbringing to Bobby.”

The young actors noted that they didn’t receive that much direction on set. “You’re expected to be so in-character,” said Badalamenti, “when you come up

with things your character would do.” Eagen said she’s often reminded to give more energy — likely because her character is five years her junior.

Because the scenes were not filmed in chronological order, the actors said it was challenging at first to connect to their fellow castmates. But over time, Eagen said, she feels a more natural connection to her on-screen family.

The students acquired much of their experience on stage — whether in school productions, community theater at Royal Oak’s Stagecrafters, or in locally-made online or educational films — so performing for the camera for a feature film took some adjustment. Eagen and Badalamenti joked about how they seem to talk too loudly or how they had to remember to tone down their actions compared to a live performance. But there have already been perks. While filming near Royal Oak Music Theatre recently a few friends spotted Eagen on the street and asked what was going on. “They’re filming a movie and I’m in it,” she told them.

With locations spanning Oakland County, filming has changed the way these teenagers see their own stomping grounds. Badalamenti, Eagen, Perrenoud and Rupe talked about the proximity of the locations to their own homes. Mary’s house in the film is located on 14 Mile near Lahser — in the same neighborhood where Eagen has attended graduation parties — and film trailers graced the grounds at Brother Rice High School in Bloomfield Hills.

As the experience draws to a close, the young actors continue to ponder their futures. It’s clear in some manner acting will be a part of that. With Eagen on her way to University of Michigan in the fall and her former classmates nearing the end of their days at Groves High School, Rutherford said, “this is exciting. The exposure at their age is a life-changing moment. They’re never not going to have this memory.”

What’s more? It’s all been captured on film.

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Great Lakes Chamber Fest brings world-renowned composers to metro area

The year of 1938 saw the births of four celebrated American composers — William Bolcom, John Corigliano, John Harbison, and Joan Tower. On June 23, the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival will feature a special program of their works, in honor of the composers' 70th birthdays.

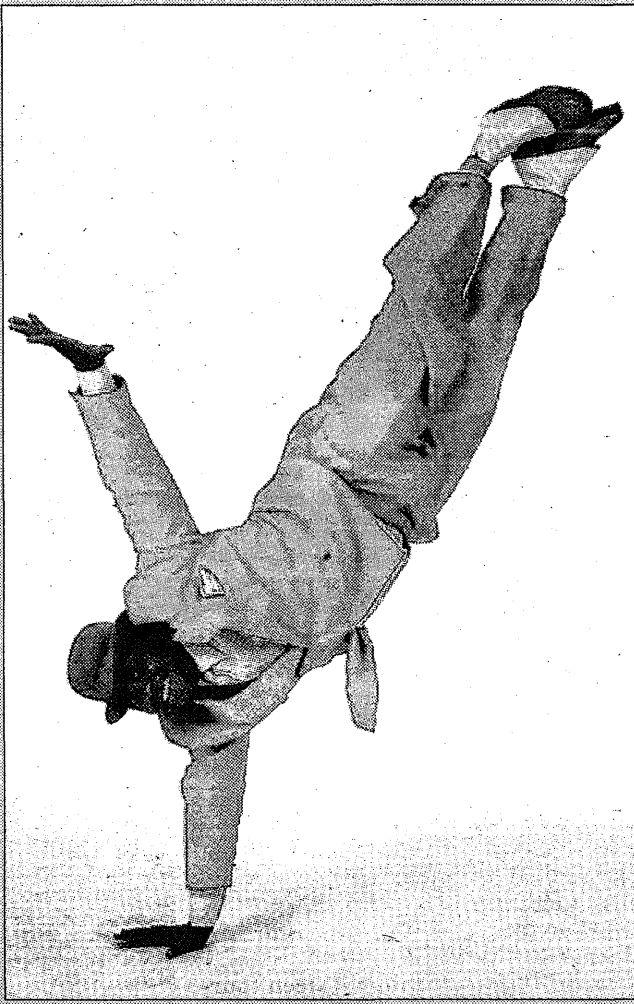
The concert will take place at 7:30 p.m. at Temple Beth El, located at 7400 Telegraph Road in Bloomfield Hills. A champagne reception will follow the concert, with all four composers in attendance.

With a combined list of achievements that includes Grammy Awards, Pulitzer Prizes, Grawemeyers and Academy Awards, each of these composers has contributed innovative and critically-acclaimed works to the contemporary American repertoire.

On June 23, audience members will enjoy a sampling of these pieces, including Harbison's Mirabai Songs, Corigliano's Sonata for Violin and Piano, Tower's Trio "For Daniel", and selected cabaret songs by Bolcom. Performing will be world-class artists James Tocco, Jeremy Denk, Edward Auer, Ida Kavafian, Joan Morris, and others.

To purchase tickets, \$32 in advance (\$10 for those 25 and under); \$37 at the door, call (248) 559-2097 or visit greatlakeschambermusic.org.





Tap it Up

Clarkston native Denise Caston, of Motor City Dance Productions, wants to keep young dancers on their toes. This month she presents the first-ever Motor City Tap Fest June 26-29 including a full schedule of classes (including instructor Robert L. Reed, pictured), performances, a panel discussion and participant's showcase. It's meant to reach out to the next generation of aspiring dancers, connecting them to leading tap artists. Festival activities take place at The Marriott Hotel inside Detroit's Renaissance Center and Dondero Auditorium at Royal Oak Middle School, 709 Washington Ave., Royal Oak. Visit <http://motorcitytapfest.com> or call (917) 687-4811 for more information.



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Egypt Central brings its polished sound to the Magic Bag

BY LANA MINI
O&E STAFF WRITER

Egypt Central is another one of those bands who appeal to Hot Topic customers with its sound that has some Linkin Park angst, yet are softer and seemingly more accessible.

The Magic Bag will be packed on Tuesday, June 24 with fans who want to see the cute boys of Egypt Central with their well-trimmed facial hair, groomed dreadlocks, super-smooth spiked hair and perfectly applied eyeliner as they melodically sing about "having enough and taking you down."

The rock band's sound is a blend of Evanscence, Limp Bizkit, Alice in Chains and Tool, but not as aggressive. It has been drawing crowds of moshing fans since touring on Ozzfest and the Family Values tour. Egypt Central was discovered by Lava Records' Jason Flom — who knows a marketable band when he sees one. He also helped put bands on the map like Skid Row, Kid Rock, Stone Temple Pilots and Uncle Kracker.

The song *Over and Over* can be heard in The Stone Cold Steve Austin movie *The Condemned*.

The band name is taken from a tough road that runs through their Memphis hometown. Egypt Central members are vocalist John T. Falls, bass player Joey Chicago, guitarists Heath Hindman and Jeff James, and drummer Blake Allison.

About the music, Chicago said, "We realize just how important our role is as musicians. We want people to feel good about listening to our music and overcoming obstacles in life that can really slow you down."

The band is now on Fat Lady Music/ILG and has been touring hard throughout the U.S.



Memphis-based Egypt Central plays in Ferndale.

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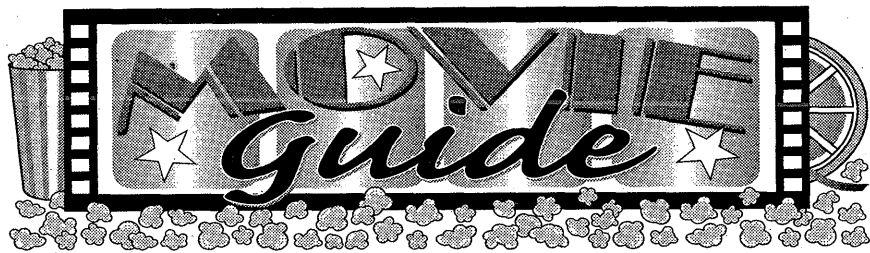
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PHOTOS BY DENNIS ELLIOTT

Clay Artist Michael Gunderson crafted these vases with faces, featured at the Royal Oak Clay & Glass Festival.

Royal Oak hosts 14th Clay and Glass Festival

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA
O&E STAFF WRITER

With the barrage of art festivals and craft shows flooding the metro Detroit area every summer, Royal Oak's modest must-see Clay and Glass Festival still manages to set itself apart from the pack. When the festival got its start — 14 years ago — organizers designed it to focus on ceramic and glass works to carve out its own identity. While there's no telling what the future might hold, Shelly Kemp predicts the addition of metalworks in years to come. As director of events for the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce which hosts the festival, Kemp said doesn't feel it will change the overall aesthetic of the show.

But this year's festival will expand in a different way. A pre-glow event kicks off the weekend from 5-11 p.m. Friday with food and live entertainment. Though the artists will still be setting up, not yet showing their wares, it adds a new attraction along Fifth Street in downtown Royal Oak.

"Within the last four of five years we've added the food portion of the show," said Kemp. From a beer and wine tent to selected treats from Royal Oak eateries like Pita Cafe and Zumba, visitors wandering along

CLAY & GLASS GALORE

When: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, June 21, and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, June 22. Food and music on Fifth Street will be available 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday, and from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Where: Along Washington Avenue at Fifth Street in downtown Royal Oak

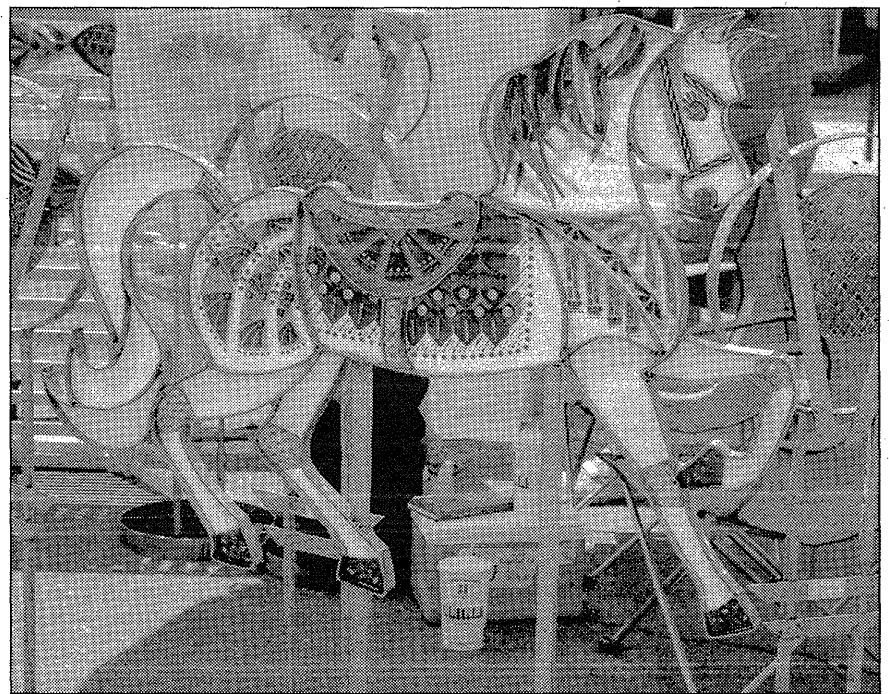
Admission: Free

Parking: Choose an area parking structure for 2 hours of free parking Saturday, and all parking is free on Sunday.

Fifth and Sixth streets during the festival can quench their appetites while wandering among the art. Royal Oak's Creative Arts Studio will again host a hands-on children's station and live music and DJs will fill the streets with music.

Newcomers to the festival can expect a casual atmosphere, according to Kemp. Tents for 115 artists stretch along Washington Avenue. In the past, organizers have seen between 40,000 and 70,000 visitors during the festival's two days.

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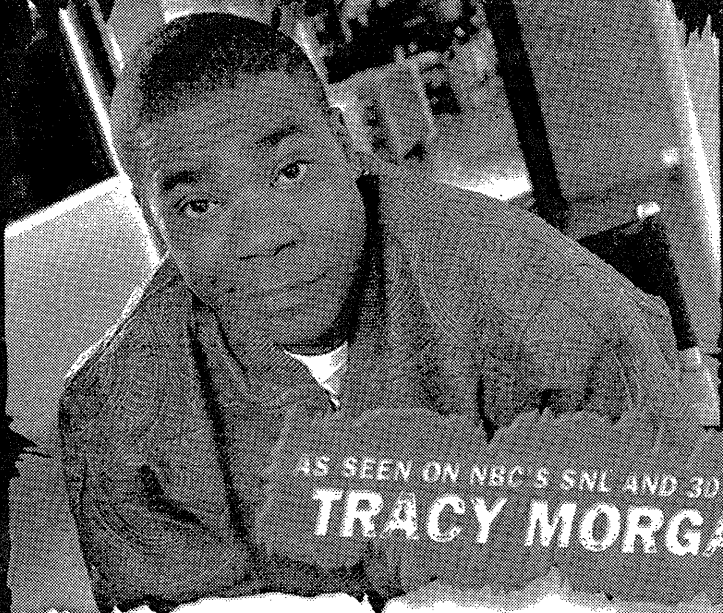


Stained glass, and garden goods, will again be featured at Royal Oak's Clay and Glass Festival, this Saturday and Sunday.



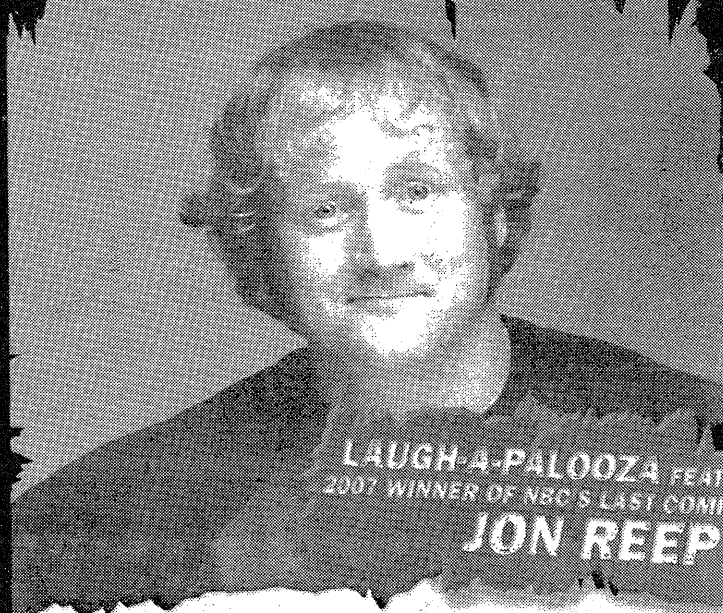
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