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ENTERTAINMENT, B6

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FOOD, B7



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Holiday hours

Municipal offices in both Plymouth and Plymouth Township will be closed Thursday and Friday, Nov. 22-23, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Trash pickup will also be delayed by one day due to the holiday in the township. Trash collection in the City of Plymouth is not affected.

Normal business hours will resume in both communities on Monday, at 8 a.m. in the city and 8:30 a.m. in the township.

Sworn in

U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg last week administered the oath of office swearing in eight new members of the National Museum and Library Services Board

appointed by President Barack Obama, including former Plymouth Community Arts Council director Paula Gangopadhyay.

The board is the advisory body for the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Members of the board are selected to serve based on their expertise and commitment to libraries or museums.

Gangopadhyay is now the Chief Learning officer at The Henry Ford, which includes The Henry Ford museum, Greenfield Village, Benson Ford Research Center, Ford Rouge Factory tour, IMAX, and the Henry Ford Academy. She was executive director of the PCAC from 2006-08.

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Volume 126 • Number 30

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Return Address:
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Snyder drafts major K-12 changes

By Brad Kadrach
Observer Staff Writer

Gov. Rick Snyder has made it clear he believes the state needs to restructure the way it pays for and oversees public education.

The draft of his new act to govern the financing of education would allow K-12 students to choose school districts, expand use of online learning and hand out monetary incentives of \$2,500 per semester for finishing high school early.

If and when it makes its way through the legislative process, the

proposed Michigan Public Education Finance Act would replace the School Aid Act of 1979.

And, while the governor believes the steps are necessary to create "career-ready citizens," local educators and some legislators have their doubts.

"It's basically a dismantling of public schools," said Jeremy Hughes, superintendent of Plymouth-Canton Community Schools.

Lots of change

The draft bill was released Monday on the Oxford Foundation's website at oxfordfoundationmi.com.

It was drafted by Lansing attorney Richard McLellan and is designed to allow students to learn "any time, any place, any way."

It would, among other things:

- Allow students to move to any district in the state willing to accept them. Districts would still have the ability to decide whether to participate in open enrollment.
- Give students access to online learning from across the state, with the cost paid by the state. Districts providing online courses would get public funding based on performance.



Snyder

Please see SNYDER, A10



Fred Hill and his Briefcase Drill Team have been invited back to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.

Bite o' the Big Apple

Briefcase team back in Thanksgiving parade

By Matt Jachman
Observer Staff Writer

It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience — again.

That's how Fred Hill describes the encore performance of his Fred Hill Briefcase Drill Team in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, which will take place Thursday in Manhattan.

The team, long a feature of Detroit's Thanksgiving parade and a show-stopper at events around the country, including the Fiesta Bowl and the Indianapolis 500, was invited back to Macy's parade this year, four years after its 2008 New York debut.

"We're ready to rock and roll," said Hill, the "general" of the 16-man Plymouth troupe whose choreographed antics and spirited chants mock its bland appearance. The group had a final home rehearsal — at its "secret location" atop downtown Plymouth's parking deck — on Sunday night.

"What a thrill it is to be going back there again," Hill added.

The Macy's return engagement is unusual, said Hill, because organizers there are usually looking for new performers and features. But the New York crowd — estimated at three million or more — enjoyed the team so much four years ago, he said, it was invited back.



The Fred Hill Briefcase Drill Team is a popular attraction, particularly in Plymouth's annual Fourth of July parade.

'It's a rush'
Veteran team member Cam Miller described the Macy's parade experience as both humbling and exhilarating. "Every single window as far up as you can see if full of people's faces," Miller said,

describing buildings along the Macy's route. "It's a rush." "They absolutely went crazy," added Miller, an attorney and the prosecutor for the city of Plymouth. "It's a very humbling experience to have."

The 2008 New York crowd was so loud, Miller said, Hill sometimes had to communicate with his marchers through hand signals rather than shouted orders.

Please see PARADE, A3

Santa's visit marks Christmas kickoff

By Matt Jachman
Observer Staff Writer

Downtown Plymouth's Christmas season officially begins at 6 p.m. Friday when Santa Claus, greeted by hundreds of children and their parents, stops in at Kellogg Park.

The Jolly Old Elf's long-awaited arrival in recent years has come with an even bigger buildup, including, this year, live entertainment, free candy for his younger fans and the chance to visit the Plymouth Historical Museum for crafts and a special Christmas exhibit.

"We get hundreds of people in the park, and so instead of them just waiting ... we entertain them a little bit," said Tony Bruscatto, operations director of the Downtown Development Authority, which sponsors many of the holiday kickoff events.

The evening starts off at 5:15 p.m. at Kellogg Park with holiday songs from the student choir at Plymouth-Canton Educational Park. At 5:30 p.m. Christine Belisario, who performs as Christmas Carol, will take the stage with a variety show, including magic and ventriloquism. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive, via fire truck, about 6 p.m., and will preside over the lighting of the park's Christmas tree. Santa's visit is sponsored by the Plymouth Community Chamber of Commerce, and he will hear children's Christmas wish lists in his "Santa house" beginning about 6:30 p.m.

Please see KICKOFF, A3



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Santa Claus makes his annual arrival in downtown Plymouth's Kellogg Park Friday at 6 p.m.



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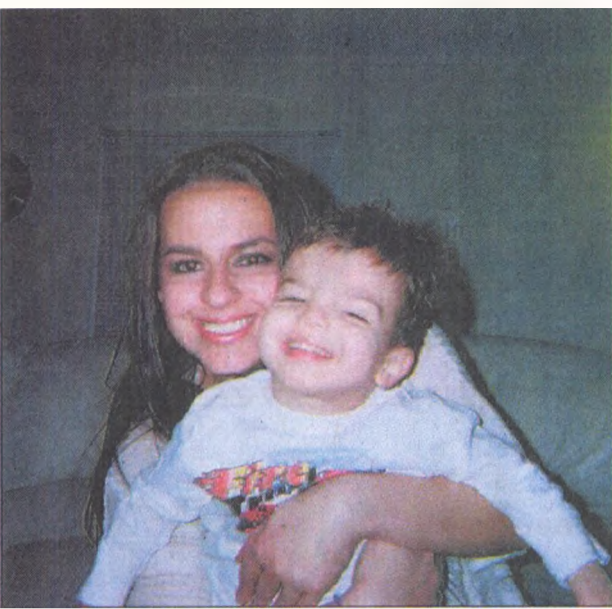
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Plymouth mom sues for alleged abuse



Lauren Gohl of Plymouth, with her son Jayden, who is at the center of an alleged abuse case at a Livonia elementary school.

By Karen Smith
Observer Staff Writer

An attorney representing a special-needs preschooler allegedly abused by a former Livonia Public Schools teacher said he would file a lawsuit Tuesday in U.S. District Court seeking in excess of \$75,000 for physical and emotional injuries the boy suffered.

The lawsuit is the first of at least three expected to be filed on behalf of children in the Webster Elementary School class taught last school year by Sharon Turbiak.

LPS Superintendent Randy Liepa said parents have a right to seek a grievance through the court system. "If that's

what they wish to do, I certainly understand that's an option for them," he said.

An internal report recently released by LPS includes witness statements saying Turbiak slapped and yelled at the children, let them fall and laughed about it instead of supporting them when they moved to the floor or a chair, and put a boy confined to a wheelchair in the bathroom for timeout for 15 to 20 minutes. The report says a parapro in the classroom spanked a child. The first documented complaint against Turbiak was dated Oct. 24, 2011, the report says.

Boy with brain shunt grabbed by head

Attorney Ven Johnson of Detroit, who represents Jayden Gohl of Plymouth, said a social worker saw Turbiak on March 5 grab Jayden by the top of his head and jerk it backward and yell directly into his face, "You need to listen to me."

Jayden was born with hydrocephalus, has had seven brain surgeries and has a shunt in his brain. Any severe head movement and/or injury is potentially life-threatening to Jayden, Johnson said.

The social worker reported the incident to the principal, Shellie Moore, who in turn reported it to LPS human resources chief Cindy DeMann. But none of them reported it to Child Protective Services as required by law, Johnson said, and Turbiak was allowed to return to the classroom and endanger more children.

Named as defendants in the lawsuit are LPS, Wayne RESA Center, Turbiak, Liepa, Moore, DeMann and Nancy Respondeck, the parapro. The class was part of a Wayne RESA center program serving students from multiple districts. All 12 of the children who were in the class are cognitively impaired and some also have physical impairments.

Mark Schultz, the district's public safety administrator and a former police officer, reported the issue to Livonia Police Department on April 24, the day after he began the internal investigation.

Turbiak was placed on leave in April, and the school board voted June 18 to recommend the state tenure commission terminate Turbiak's employment. Turbiak then resigned, effective March 31, 2013, and the Michigan Tenure Commission dismissed the case against her. She remains on paid administrative leave until March 31, 2013. The school board fired the parapro June 13.

Livonia police sought warrants from the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, but those warrants were denied and the case was closed.

Turbiak has not returned calls from the *Observer*.

Johnson said his client's rights were violated and he suffered physical pain and suffering, mental anguish, embarrassment and humiliation. The lawsuit seeks punitive damages and reasonable expenses of medical care, treatment and services.

'A failed culture'

Parents of other students in the classroom spoke at Monday's school board meeting, including D.J. Hurula, whose daughter Katelyn was in the class and whose wife, Becky, is a 17-year LPS teacher.

Hurula said the abuse Katelyn and the other children in the classroom suffered was "perpetuated by the incompetence and inaction of teachers, therapists, building administrators and staff at central office."

He said the district failed his daughter. "The one thing a school district exists to provide, a safe and productive learning environment for its students — all of its students, yes, even the special-needs kids — you failed to provide," he said.

Lawsuits like the one already filed are a sign of a failed culture, he told the board: "You have the responsibility to initiate the kinds of reform that will be required to fix the culture and climate at Livonia Public Schools."

Resident Brad Wolkan said the board needs to resolve the Webster issue before asking voters for a construction bond of more than \$200 million. He said it needs to fix LPS culture and environment and remove Liepa.

"How can you, our representatives, ask us voters to trust a morally and financially irresponsible administration with that amount of public funds when they have already proven they cannot be trusted with the most precious thing we have, our children?" he asked.

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PARADE

Continued from page A1

The team was to fly to New York Tuesday morning and was to meet that evening with Macy's representatives for a rehearsal. Wednesday is a free day, and they'll get in a little warmup time on Thanksgiving morning before the parade steps off, just outside Central Park, at 9 a.m.

The Macy's parade, for the most part, proceeds down 6th Avenue to around 34th Street, where Macy's is located. It is broadcast on NBC to much of the country — but not in this area, where NBC features the Detroit parade instead.

Team members all wear dark blue business suits, white shirts and identical ties, and carry identical briefcases used in their drills. Hill said they'll be performing their "classic" maneuvers such as the



Fred Hill and the Briefcase Drill Team have been doing their thing for nearly three decades.

Businessman's Shuffle and Boom-Chucka-Lucka, a crowd favorite.

"We look business. We are totally un-business," Hill said.

Hill, a Realtor, founded the team in 1985 as a fun way of promoting the downtown Plymouth clothing store he owned at the time. The team made its first appearance in

Detroit's parade in 1987 — and has been at every one since, but for 2008 — and quickly caught on.

"There isn't really anything that approaches what we are," said Hill, who was inspired by a formation of lawn mower-pushing men he saw at a parade in his home town of Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

On the town

Team members, who are paying for the New York trip themselves, are staying at the Radisson Martinique, which is near Macy's.

Some planned to take in a University of Michigan basketball game at Madison Square Garden during their free time; Miller, who also made

the trip in 2008, said his plans include visiting St. Patrick's Cathedral, heading to Ground Zero to see the rebuilding there and riding the Staten Island Ferry to get a good look at the Statue of Liberty.

Hill said team members were concerned about heading to the parade in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, which caused much destruction on the East Coast when it struck last month. He said they feared they would be using hotel rooms and other resources that people displaced by the storm would need, and that their frivolity be inappropriate so soon after the storm.

But a Macy's representative sent a note saying that recovery was under way and that the parade would signal a return to normalcy for New Yorkers and be a part of the healing process.

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KICKOFF

Continued from page A1

The Plymouth Corps of the Salvation Army will have its canteen truck at the park to offer free hot chocolate to visitors.

Also beginning at 6:30 p.m., visitors will have a chance for free admission to the historical museum for the new exhibit "A Dickens of a Christmas." Children visiting the museum will have the chance to make a snowman ornament. The museum will be open until 9 p.m.

Bruscato said the Christmas kickoff events will follow what is expected to be a busy afternoon at downtown stores. The Friday after Thanksgiving starts off a little slow in the downtown shopping district, he said, as shoppers tend to hit malls and big-box stores early for bargains, but traffic often picks up in the afternoons.

Santa's hours at his Kellogg Park house are: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, then noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 1, then 6-8 p.m. Dec. 7, then noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 8, Dec. 15 and Dec. 16, then 6-8 p.m. Dec. 21, noon to 5 p.m. Dec. 22 and noon to 4 p.m. Dec. 23.

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Knifing suspect faces charges

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

An Inkster man accused of brandishing a knife and cutting a Novi police officer while allegedly robbing a Canton retail store of a 42-inch television could face penalties ranging up to life in prison if he is convicted of a laundry list of criminal charges.

Alden Ralph Mays, 57, is facing a hearing Monday in 35th District Court on charges of armed robbery, assault with intent to do great bodily harm (less than murder), felonious assault, resisting and obstructing a police officer and being a habitual offender, authorities said.

Mays was charged after Canton police investigated an incident that happened just before noon Friday, Nov. 9, inside the



Mays

er said.

Mays is jailed with a \$1 million/10 percent bond, meaning he would have to post \$100,000 to leave jail as he awaits a preliminary examination that will determine whether he should stand trial in Wayne County Circuit Court.

According to a Canton police report, a suspect was trying to steal the television when two female loss-prevention employees tried to stop him. A Novi police officer who was in the Walmart store investigating an unrelated credit card

Walmart store on Michigan Avenue west of Belleville Road, Detective Sgt. Dave Schreiner said.

fraud case intervened, grabbed the suspect and took him to an office.

Inside the office, the suspect reached in his pocket, brandished a knife and began to resist the Novi officer, who was cut on the hand as he moved toward the suspect to kick him in the chest and push him out of the office, the police report said. The officer wasn't seriously injured.

Authorities said the suspect then fled the store but was found by Canton officers inside a 2005 Cadillac XRS in the parking lot, where he was taken into custody.

The police report indicated the knife was retrieved from under a seat of the car while a second, smaller pocket knife was found on a key chain.

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Police nab bank robbery suspect

By Darrell Clem
Observer Staff Writer

A bank robbery ended peacefully Monday morning after Canton police took a suspect into custody not far from the Bank of America branch on Michigan Avenue west of Canton Center, Detective Sgt. Dave Schreiner said.

Police received a call just moments after 9 a.m. that a suspect described as a middle-aged white

male, "scruffy in appearance," went inside the bank and produced a note demanding money, Schreiner said.

"No weapon was implied," he said. A teller complied with the suspect's demands, and he managed to escape briefly with an undisclosed amount of money, Schreiner said.

However, police officers in the area quickly located a man fitting the suspect's description

and took him into custody. The suspect was captured on foot.

"It was a good job by the police officers," Schreiner said.

A preliminary investigation indicated the man is homeless but previously had a Canton address, Schreiner said. Charges were pending, and the suspect's name hadn't yet been released.

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CRIME WATCH

Disorderly conduct

A 22-year-old Brighton man was arrested on a disorderly conduct charge Saturday night after being kicked out of an electronic music concert at Compuware Arena on Beck Road.

An additional charge was added when police later found two "joints" of suspected marijuana among the suspect's possessions.

An arena security guard told police the man and a friend had just been ejected from the concert for being disorderly and were walking across a parking lot when the man deliberately threw himself against a parked Pontiac Grand Prix, breaking off an exterior mirror.

A Plymouth Township Police Department report said that after an officer arrived the man was "running his mouth," saying the police "have nothing on" him and couldn't arrest him.

Police said the man appeared intoxicated and ignored repeated requests by people there, including his friend, that he quiet down. Police left a note for the Grand Prix's owner asking that he or she contact them in order to press a vandalism charge.

At the police station, the report said, the man was too drunk to go through the booking process, which had to wait until he sobered up. That's when, police said, two marijuana cigarettes were found in a cigarette pack.

Police said the "joints" tested positive for marijuana, and the suspect was also charged with marijuana possession.

Theft from vehicle

The catalytic converter was stolen from a Buick Rendezvous parked outside a home on Newport Drive one night earlier this month.

The theft was discovered on the morning of Nov. 12; the complainant told police it had occurred some time since 10 p.m. the day before. The Rendezvous was parked in a carport at the time of the theft.

Catalytic converters are sometimes stolen for their scrap metal value.

Spice report

Canton police arrested a driver and impounded his car after he was caught with the now-illegal synthe-

tic drug known as K2 or Spice, a police report said.

The suspect was arrested around 11:30 p.m. Sunday near Ford and Canton Center after officers spotted him abruptly changing lanes without signaling, the report said. The suspect also had an out-of-state license plate on the floor behind the driver's seat — a plate he told police he had gotten from his job with a car dealership.

The suspect told police he bought the K2 before the law went into effect. The police report indicated he had eight grams of the substance.

Home invasion

A woman notified police after her residence in the 45200 block of Claymore, northeast of Warren and Canton Center, was broken into, a police report said. The incident happened sometime between 9 p.m. Saturday and 2:50 a.m. Sunday.

A police report indicated a window had been shattered. The woman said missing items included two laptop computers, a flat-screen television and three other TVs, purses, jewelry and other electronic equipment.

Car break-in

A man reported that someone went into his unlocked car and stole some of his belongings while it was parked in the 40400 block of Blytheville, southwest of Palmer and Lotz, sometime prior to 10:15 a.m. last Thursday.

The man told police missing items included a wallet, a GPS unit, an iPod and headphones.

The police report indicated his wallet was later recovered near Michigan Avenue and Lotz, though money and credit cards had been removed.

Lost purse

A man notified police last Thursday after he found a purse with spilled contents in a driveway on Brookdale, in the 1600 block of Northbrook Court, northeast of Lotz and Palmer.

Police tracked the purse to a woman who lives on a nearby street. She told police her purse was taken from inside her unlocked GMC Yukon between 10 p.m. Nov. 14 and 6:20 a.m. Nov. 15. She said the vehicle was ransacked while parked in her driveway.

A wallet and credit cards were missing from the purse.

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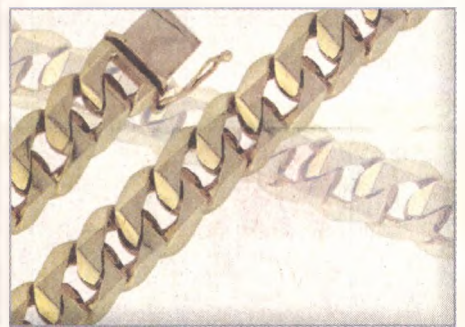
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'Friends' host annual candlelight vigil

Candles will glow around the world Sunday, Dec. 9, when tens of thousands of bereaved parents, siblings, grandparents, relatives and friends will join together to light remembrance candles to honor the memories of children who have died, but will never be forgotten.

Held annually the second Sunday in December, this will be the 16th Worldwide Candle Lighting sponsored by The Compassionate Friends, the nation's largest self-help bereavement organization for families that have suffered the tragic loss of a child. TCF has more than 650 chapters in the United States, with sister organizations in at least 30 countries around the globe.

The local ceremony, sponsored by the TCF Western Wayne County (Livonia) chapter, takes place in Plymouth's Kellogg Park beginning at 7 p.m. The remembrance



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gail Lafferty of Livonia reads the names of children lost to their families during The Compassionate Friends candlelight vigil in Plymouth's Kellogg Park. This year's vigil is set for Sunday, Dec. 9.

will include a candlelight vigil, reading of the children's names, poetry and songs. Families will gather near memory trees specially decorated with the names of children who have died too soon.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is a way of uniting together to remember all children around the world who have died too soon and to try to bring light out of darkness during this difficult time of the year. Like a ring, this

circle of light surrounding the globe represents that there is no beginning and no end for the love we carry for our children.

Friends and family are invited to the remembrance and candles will be provided. Parents do not have to attend to register their child.

For more information or to register a child, call (734) 778-0800 or email either Gail Lafferty or Brenda Hernandez at tcf-candlelight@yahoo.com

Check us out on the Web every day at hometownlife.com



hap.org/medicare

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Novi
Wed., Nov. 28

Livonia
Fri., Dec. 7



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A sales person will be present with information and applications. For accommodation of persons with special needs at sales meetings call (800) 449-1515 or TTY/TDD (800) 649-3777. Workshops discuss plans for Medicare-eligible individuals who purchase their own health care coverage.



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"Around Town" 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.

EUCHRE TOURNNEY
Date/Time: Saturday, Nov. 24, 6 p.m.

Location: Plymouth Elks Club, 41700 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth

Details: The Salem Wrestling Boosters is hosting their annual Fall Euchre Tournament. The cost is \$25 per player and you must be at least 21 years old to participate. Awards will be given to the top 3 players with the highest scores. There will also be raffles and great prizes. Complimentary food and cash bar is also available. Walk-ins welcome but seating is limited.

Contact: E-mail rkddox@aol.com or call (734) 981-7913 or (313) 706-3282 for more information.

HOLIDAY ART FAIR

Date/Time: Dec. 1, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: Connection Church in Canton

Details: Connection Church in Canton hosts a Holiday Art Fair. If you have a craft and are interested in renting a table (\$35 & \$25).

Contact: For more information please email Katy at cchoidayartfair@gmail.com.

FARRAND FAIR

Date/Time: Thursday, Nov. 29, 4-8 p.m.

Location: Farrand Elementary School, 41400 Greenbriar Lane, Plymouth

Details: Farrand Elementary hosts its fifth annual Craft & Vendor Fair. Find that last minute gift, or something unique and special for someone on your holiday shopping list. Admission is free. Raffle items, jewelry, candles, health & wellness, skin care, hair accessories and much, much more. Need a little bit of extra cash to shop? South Lyon Jewelers will be there paying you cash for your gold. Go through your jewelry boxes and find broken or unwanted gold to sell at this event. Babysitting will be provided from 4-6 p.m. in the school media center. Children will have the opportunity to watch a movie and make a craft.

BLOOD DRIVES

Date/Time: Various

Location: Various
Details: The American Red Cross has scheduled a variety of blood drives around the community: Friday, Nov. 23, 11 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. at the Summit on the Park in Canton; and Thursday, Nov. 29, 1:30-7:15 p.m., St. Michael Lutheran Church, 7000 N. Sheldon in Plymouth.

Contact: To make an appt for any of these drives, call Diane at (313) 549-7052 or email diane.risko@redcross.org

MIXED MUSINGS

Date/Time: Through November

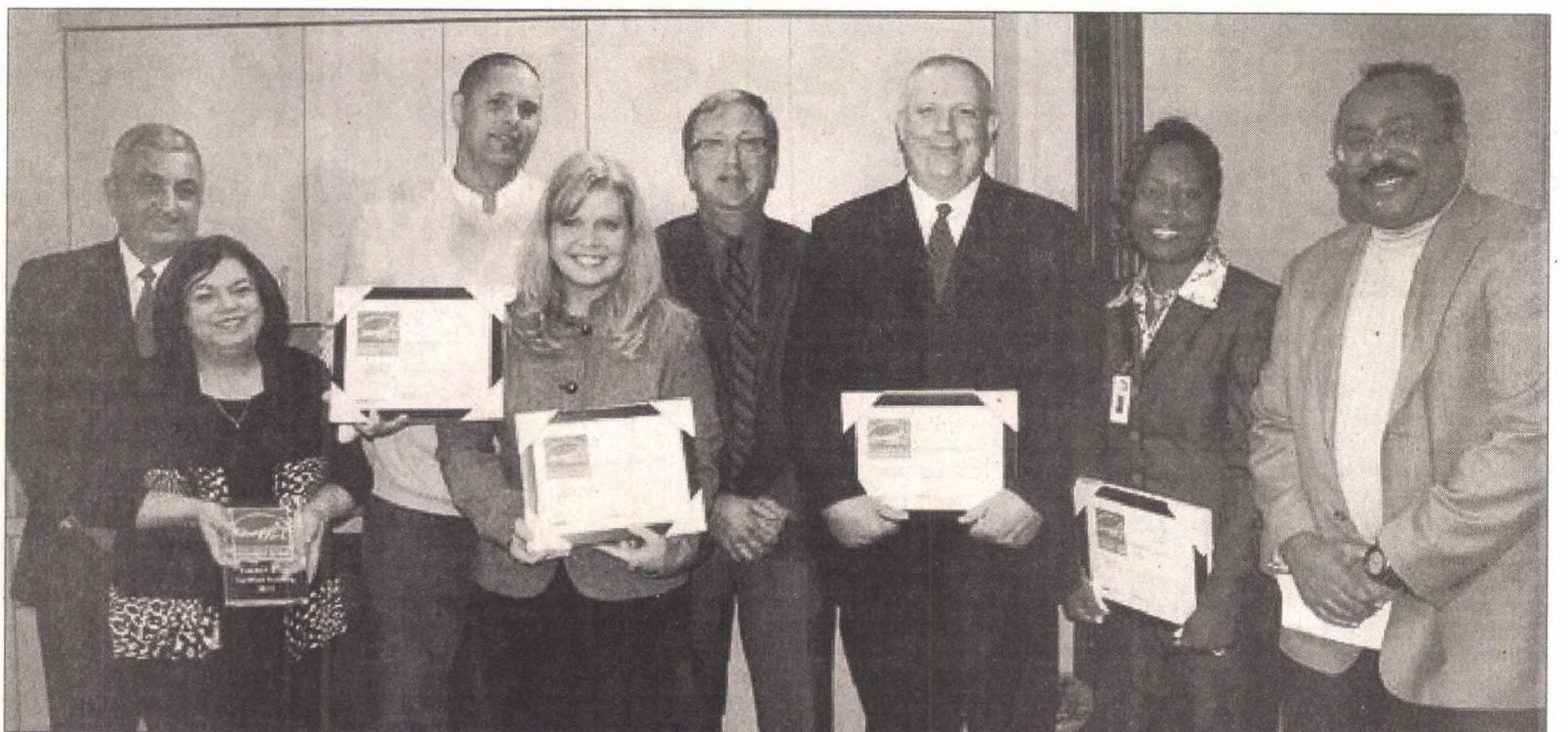
Location: Plymouth Community Arts Council, 774 N. Sheldon, Plymouth

Details: Peggy Kerwan will kick off the 2012-2013 solo exhibit season with her exhibit titled "mixed musings." Her colorful artworks will be displayed for the month of November in the main gallery. Admission is free and open to the public. An artist reception takes place Saturday, Nov. 17, from 2-4 p.m. Meet the artist, supporters, and members of the PCAC. Exhibit hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Contact: Call (734) 416-4278 or visit www.plymoutharts.com for more information.

JAZZ @ THE ELKS

Date/Time: Tuesday, Nov.



FRANK RUGGIRELLO

Energy honors

Four Plymouth-Canton schools — Pioneer and West Middle Schools and Workman and Tonda Elementary Schools — have received the nationally recognized Energy Star Award for 2012 in recognition of their superior performance. This is the highest recognition available and buildings that earn the EPA's Energy Star Award use 35 percent less energy and generate 35 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions than similar buildings across the nation. The awards were given for performance during the 2011-12 school year.

27, 7-10 p.m.

Location: Plymouth Elks Lodge 1780, 41700 Ann Arbor Road, Plymouth

Details: The Plymouth Elks Lodge #1780 in Plymouth MI has Jazz @ The Elks in a beautiful club setting on the last Tuesday of every month. The Nov. 27 event features the Terry Lower Trio with Russ Miller. Russ is an Assistant Professor in the Music Department at Wayne State University and has played with several famous Jazz artists. Russ plays Alto Sax and Flute. Terry will be on Keyboard, Jim Ryan on Drums, and Ray Tini on Bass. There is a \$10 donation at the door which includes hors d'oeuvres.

Contact: For more information, call (734) 453-1780 or email plymouthelks1780@yahoo.com.

WCGH REUNION

Time/Date: 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11

Location: Cafe Marquette in the William D. Ford Technical Center, 36455 Marquette, west of Wayne Road, Westland

Details: Wayne County General Hospital employees will gather for their 28th annual holiday reunion. A luncheon buffet will be served starting at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$16 and includes beverage, dessert and tip. You can pay at the door.

Contact: For more information contact Kay Shafi at (734) 427-3437 or e-mail chknlt@wideopenwest.com, Dennis Abraham at (734) 721-2917 or e-mail fightingirish316@global.net or Pat Ibbotson at (734) 331-9291 or e-mail pibbotso@aol.com.

SEWING GUILD

Date/Time: First Thursday, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: First Presbyterian Church, 701 Church, Plymouth

Details: Meetings are open to sewists of all levels. The Nov. 1 meeting features "Purse/Tote challenge" judging and holiday gift ideas; The Dec. 6 meeting features "Holiday potluck luncheon."

Contact: For more information, email ASGPC@comcast.net

HOSPICE SUPPORT

Date/Time: Third Saturday of the month, 10-11:30 a.m.

Location: Compassionate Care Hospice, 5730 Lilley, Canton

Details: Compassionate Care Hospice conducts a grief support group, "Compassionate Words," providing emotional support to any adult grieving the loss of a loved one. The group focuses on the various stages of grief, and incorporates basic journal writing as a way to express feelings. The program is free of charge.

Contact: To register, contact Ann Christensen, Compassionate Care Hospice Bereavement Coordinator at (888) 983-9050, or email achristensen@cchnet.net.

MOPS MEETINGS

Date/Time: First-third Fridays, 9:15-11:30 a.m.

Location: St. Kenneth Catholic Church, 14951 Haggerty, Plymouth

Details: The St. Edith/St. Kenneth Catholic Parishes' Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) group invites all mothers with children aged newborn through kindergarten to join.

The group provides the encouragement, nurturing, and support and features a schedule of activities that include speakers, crafts, and group discussions.

Contact: Heather at (734) 437-9517 or e-mail stekmops@gmail.com, or visit www.stekmops.org.

Home Accents Categories Listed DOES NOT INCLUDE SEASONAL 50% OFF

- Metal Sale: CHOOSE FROM METAL WALL DECOR & FUNCTIONAL & DECORATIVE METAL ACCESSORIES. INCLUDES FLORAL METAL CONTAINERS. DOES NOT INCLUDE FURNITURE.
- Wood Sale: CHOOSE FROM WOOD WALL DECOR & FINISHED DECORATIVE WOOD ACCESSORIES. DOES NOT INCLUDE FURNITURE & UNFINISHED CRAFT WOOD.
- Men's Metal & Wood Decor
- All Wicker, Decorative Boxes & Storage: DOES NOT INCLUDE LARGE TRUNKS & CRAFT & PAPER-CRAFTING STORAGE.
- Glass Sale: INCLUDES GLASS DEPARTMENT, FLORAL GLASS VASES & CRAFT GLASS CONTAINERS. DOES NOT INCLUDE CRAFT STAINED GLASS & GLASS TABLE TOPS.
- Decorative Crosses
- Candleholders WALL & TABLE
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- Knobs, Drawer Pulls & Handles ALWAYS 50% OFF THE MARKED PRICE
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FALL, CHRISTMAS & SPRING ITEMS ARE NOT INCLUDED IN SALE UNLESS SPECIFIED

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*All Christmas Floral Arrangements Bushes Wreaths Garlands Swags Stems Picks Ribbon 50% OFF <small>*DOES NOT INCLUDE CUSTOM DESIGNS</small>	Christmas Crafts 50% OFF ALL ITEMS LABELED MAKE-IT CHRISTMAS! CHRISTMAS CRAFTS, JESSE JAMES & ROBERT STANLEY CRAFT COLLECTIONS	Christmas Light Sets Everyday Low Prices • GE Mini Light Set 100 Count 4.99 • GE Mini Light Set 150 Count 6.99 • GE Mini Light Set 300 Count 12.99 • Chaser Light Set 150 Count, 16 Function 12.99 • Net Style Lights 150 Count 9.99 • GE Light Sets 25 Count, C-9 9.99
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Father pens book about daughter's death on 9/11

By Ken Abramczyk
Staff Writer

At 8:42 a.m. Sept. 11, 2001, Bev Titus was jolted up out of bed with what her husband John described as "a burst of energy" that would soon transform to the worst nightmare a father or mother could experience.

Bev Titus got out of bed, made coffee and turned on the television to see a plane hit the South Tower of the World Trade Center, then drove to her husband John's office at Schoolcraft College. "She felt like she was being called as a witness to history," John said of her sudden jolt that morning.

Both watched the horrific events unfold on television. That morning, 19 terrorists from the Islamist militant group al-Qaeda hijacked four passenger jets. Two planes were intentionally flown into the North and South towers of the World Trade Center. The towers collapsed within two hours. A third plane was flown intentionally into the Pentagon, while a fourth crashed into a field in rural Pennsylvania after passengers attempted to take control of the jet.

Nearly 3,000 people died that day, victims of the worst terrorist attack in American history.

John and Bev Titus learned later that their daughter Alicia, 27, a flight attendant, was on United Airlines Flight 175, which crashed into the south tower.

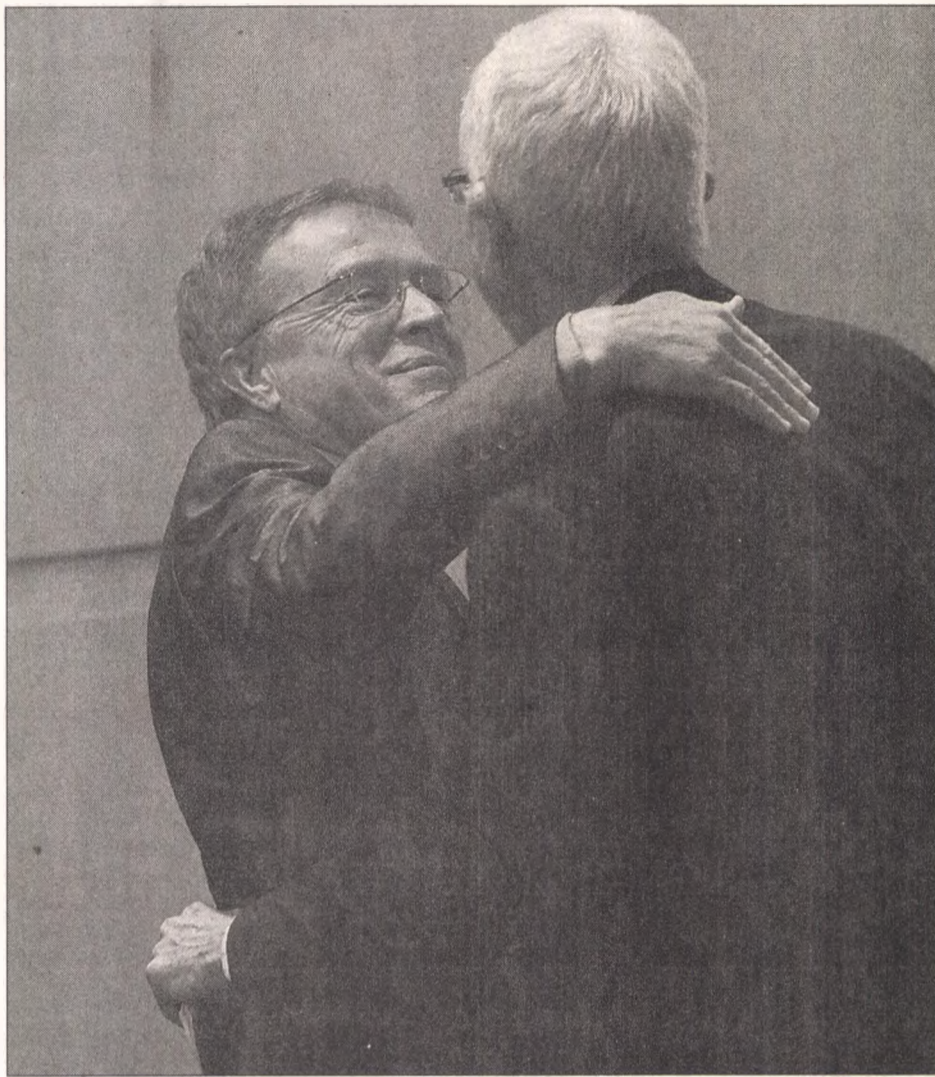
John Titus returned last week to Schoolcraft to discuss with students his profound loss and overwhelming grief. Titus, who retired in 2009 as a mental health counselor and faculty member at Schoolcraft, wrote a book about his loss and journey of grief titled *Losing Alicia: A Father's Journey After 9/11*, published last year. Titus wrote about his struggle over the murder of his daughter, and his agonizing grief after one of the most horrific tragedies in American history.

Titus described his emotions and the withdrawal he felt the day before the appearance and the tears he shed that morning, remembering he was returning to the origin and beginning of his journey of grief.

"It's great to be back here, but it's hard," Titus said.

Wave of panic

On Sept. 11, 2001, denial "protected" the couple at first, Titus said, but the



Author John L. Titus greets Stuart C. Baker, counselor at Schoolcraft College, Baker was in a meeting with Titus as the 9/11 tragedy unfolded.



Several Schoolcraft students listen to author John L. Titus.

phone kept ringing that day at their home. When United Airlines called to inform them that Alicia was on the plane, "we felt a wave of panic and sadness. When the panic hit, it was like a tsunami. Our cries of anguish threatened to take our breaths away."

"Life, as we knew it, would never be the same."

Phone calls came from family and friends offering support and from the media asking for interviews. The rest of the day was a blur. "We were in the midst of chaos," Titus said.

He prayed for strength; he received understanding and love from family

and friends.

The following days were struggles for the Titus family. "It was difficult to go to the stores, to hear the conversations of trivial things, conversations about 9/11, and people who would argue about it, or even watching people laughing and enjoying life," he said.

"We wanted to run away from it all, but we had to learn to cope, for our family, our children and our grandchildren."

The couple has another daughter and two sons. Eleven years have passed, but it seems like a "lifetime ago," Titus said. He remembers Alicia and her beautiful face, and he lifts a photo to show the

audience a smiling young beautiful woman. "I reminisce of the wonderful memories we shared, the warmth of her hugs; it only seems like yesterday," he said.

The Titus family now lives in Ohio. Urbana University has dedicated a park to Alicia's memory using steel from the World Trade Center for a memorial for her and the 3,000 others who died that day.

Someone asked him at the park dedication about when he got over the loss of his daughter.

"You don't get over the loss of a child; you just learn to live with it," Titus said, remembering his response.

"Grief requires an unwavering courage to face each day."

JOHN TITUS

whose daughter Alicia was a stewardess on the plane that hit the South Tower

Realization of blessings

Titus told the audience that "grief is a journey that has no endpoint." He often wondered whether he would experience joy again, as depression haunted him and Bev. "Grief strips you down to your very soul. Your ego is shattered." Stress and strain were constant.

"Grief requires an unwavering courage to face each day," he said.

Then Titus spoke of his blessings, his supporters. "I feel very blessed to have so many loving people in my life. I thank God for all the love and understanding, and much of it came from here," Titus said of Schoolcraft's faculty and staff.

Titus slowly began to realize that he could use that same love and compassion to help others and he began to feel a greater compassion for people suffering throughout the world. Since Alicia's death, Titus has become a strong advocate for peace and social justice, writing articles, doing documentaries and giving talks all over the United States, Canada and Italy on these and related issues.

Titus said true peace is found in peace with God and not in a cease-fire in a war or a strong defense in preparation of war. "Waging war seems so outdated, so primitive, so desperate," Titus said.

He also quoted Martin Luther King Jr. War doesn't diminish violence, it creates it, King once said. "Darkness cannot drive out hate, only love can do that," Titus said, quoting King.

Shortly after 9/11, Titus said he was asked by a local television reporter about what he thought of the war in Iraq. "If it means more innocent people like Alicia will die, then I am opposed," he said. That comment was edited out of the broadcasted story, Titus said.

Adding to grief

Titus said Bush's invasion of Iraq and overthrow of Saddam Hussein only added to the grief and complicated it for the 9/11 families. Titus said there were "blatant failings by the government and by intelligence agencies," which he said occurred during and prior to the Bush administration. There were also

"hidden agendas" to fight a war in the Middle East, Titus said.

Titus believes that the 9/11 Commission was stacked with members who would stop short of criticizing the Bush administration.

While Titus questions the U.S. government, he adds that he is able to enjoy life.

He said he likes to think that he is wiser, and that he is listening to a different rhythm of life. "I am deeply grateful for each day," he said. "I can feel goodness in my heart and in my soul."

Titus said that God has helped him deal with the pain and loss through seeds of hope: "God is within each of us. God is there within."

He read from Alicia and what she had written about happiness, and how a young girl's hope for a knight in shining armor evolved to a king and his kingdom, to a kingdom only, with a realization that she only needed "an infinite amount of love to give and receive freely" and a purpose, goal or a destination.

She also wrote about sorrow and happiness. "Those who have known the greatest happiness have opened themselves to the most gut-wrenching sorrow. It's a gamble, you have to play to win. Or maybe those who have endured suffering have a greater respect for joy, can appreciate it wherever they find it, the smell of a rose, the sight of a baby, an old couple holding hands."

"And those who've lived their lives in a heart-numbing cocoon of sanity, safety and contentment don't have the capacity for pure joy. Or, maybe this is what I tell myself in order to pick myself up, dust off, and hop on again."

Titus concluded with the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, which he and his wife found on Alicia's bed stand when they went to her apartment in San Francisco after her death.

Part of the prayer reads: "Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy."

kabramcz@hometownlife.com
(313) 222-2591

Museum exhibit commemorates Dickens's 200th birthday

As a tribute to Charles Dickens, who would have been 200 years old this year, folks at the Plymouth Historical Museum are presenting the museum's new special exhibit, "A Dickens of a Christmas."

Executive director Elizabeth Kerstens said staffers have "re-created the Village of Plymouth as it may have been during the Victorian era (1837-1901), which overlaps with Dickens's life (1812-1870). The exhibit runs through Jan. 13.

Christmas celebrations changed dramatically over the 64-year reign of Queen Victoria of England, for whom the Victorian era is named. This change was more pronounced in frontier areas, such as Plymouth. Plymouth Township was founded in 1827; Michigan became a state in 1837; Plymouth Cor-



The Plymouth Historical Museum's exhibit, "A Dickens of a Christmas," is a tribute to Charles Dickens, who would have been 200 years old this year.

ners became the village of Plymouth in 1867, which then became a city in 1932.

According to Kerstens, it took many months to prepare for Christmas, which

was the party season. "Winter was a special time for settlers because

it was the only time they were free from tending crops," Kerstens said. "Still, a big part of the season was spent outdoors. People played in the snow even on Christmas day. Christmas dinner was eaten shortly after noon."

In the afternoon, people went for rides in sleighs and cutters. Some played lacrosse; others went ice-sailing or ice-fishing on the lakes. Tobogganing and sledding were popular with both children and adults. Settlers had their choice of endless evergreens for Christmas decorations, which were primarily used inside. Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, popularized indoor Christmas trees in the 1840s. In our area, trees were decorated with candles, fruit, pine cones, cookies, lozenges, and home-made

ornaments.

Each Saturday until Christmas, beginning Nov. 24, Santa Claus will be available to greet children of all ages. There are no restrictions on photographing children with Santa, and there probably won't be long lines. In addition, on Saturday, Dec. 1, Santa will be at the museum 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the Museum's annual open house and Craft Bazaar. Admission is free that day.

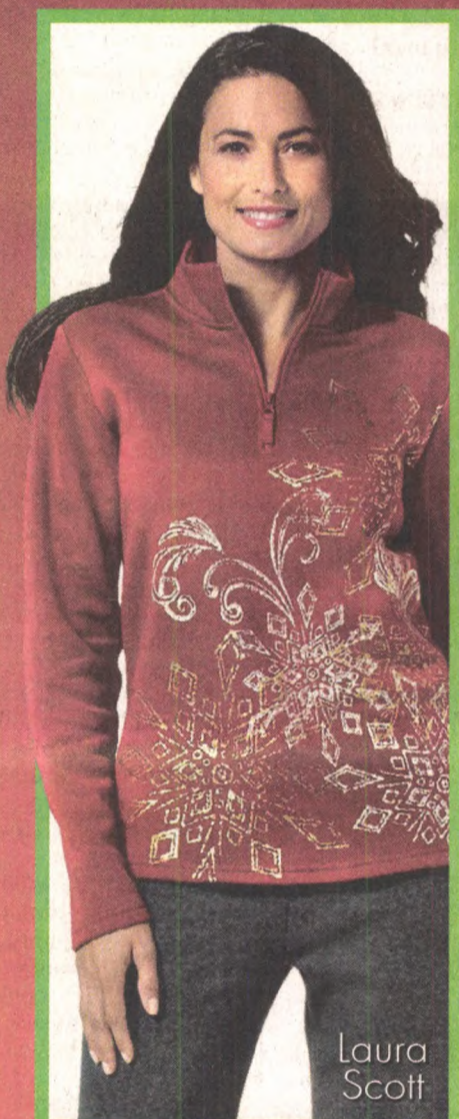
Hours of operation are Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children (6-17). The museum is family friendly, with activities to engage visiting children. Tours can be accommodated. Please call (734) 455-8940 for more information or to make a tour reservation.

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Laura Scott

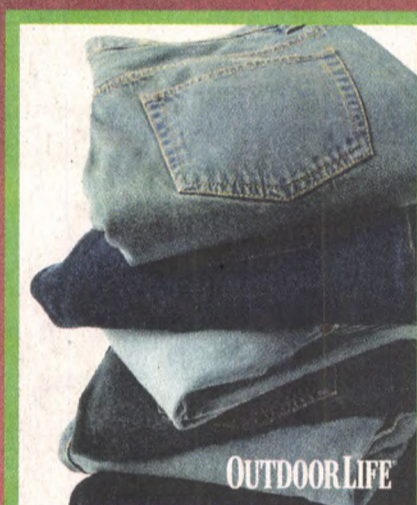
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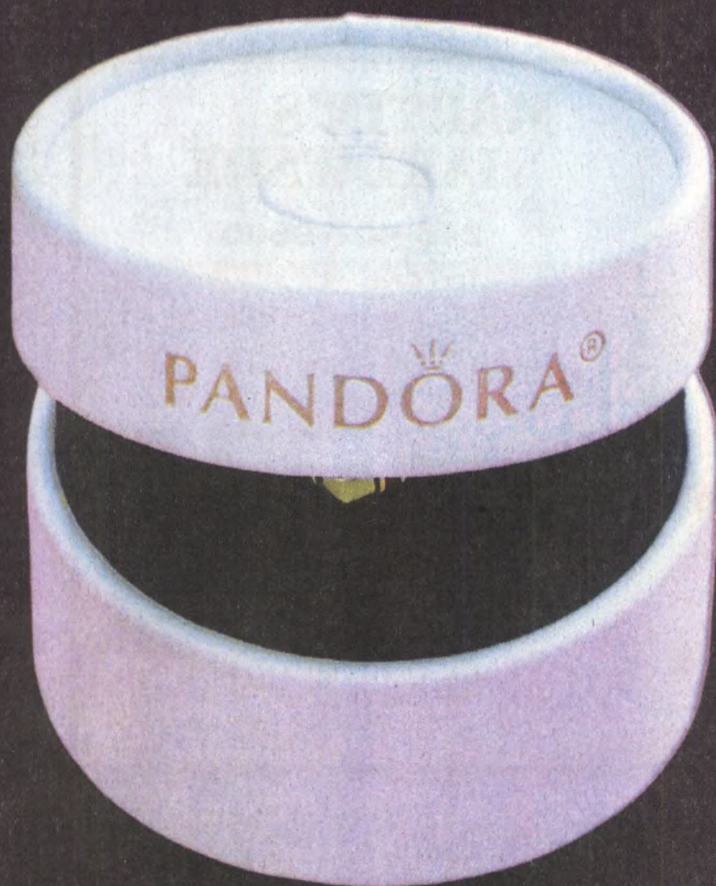
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Make it easy for loved ones to find important papers

By Rick Bloom
Guest Columnist



Money Matters
Rick Bloom

I read about a woman who had passed away a few years ago and her loved ones were still searching for assets (life insurance policies and bank accounts) that they thought she had, but they could not locate. The woman had moved a few times near the end of her life.

The story is a little more complex than that, however, the bottom line is how frustrated the family was when trying to locate her assets.

What struck me while reading the article was how common a problem this is, particularly in today's world, where people relocate many times during their lifetime. The problem of having loved ones and beneficiaries unable to locate assets upon death is easily solvable.

When people do estate planning, they generally focus on wills, trusts and other types of legal documents. These documents are important and everyone needs to make sure that they have some sort of written estate plan so that their final wishes can be followed. That being said, I also think it's important that every adult, no matter how many assets they have, also has a document locator.

A document locator is

typically not something that an attorney draws up for you, nor is it a document that you have to have signed and witnessed. Rather, it is a road map for your loved ones to follow. It is a listing of assets and where they are located.

In other words, if you have a Fidelity brokerage account, it's important to list it on the document locator. You don't necessarily have to list every investment within that account. It is sufficient that you include the account on your list. I also recommend listing the account number and, in many situations, it makes sense to include your password on that account.

On your document locator list all accounts, whether it is a brokerage account, bank account or any type of investment account. Every account should be listed along with its account number. In addition, list any liabilities you owe, such as a mortgage or any charge card accounts.

During our lifetimes, we deal with a variety of professionals that assist us when it comes to our

personal financial affairs. Whether it is a lawyer, financial adviser or an insurance agent, it's also a good idea to list these professionals on your document locator. Potentially, these individuals can provide a wealth of information to your loved ones that can assist them in handling your affairs.

I believe you should also list where your personal papers are located. For example, if you have a trust, you should state in the document locator where it is located. This also applies to things such as insurance policies and any other types of legal documents that you may have.

It's not sufficient to prepare a document locator and then forget about it. There are two additional steps needed to make sure the document stays relevant. The first is to occasionally update it. In other words, if you've decided to change your attorney, it's important to update your document locator.

In addition, if you open a new brokerage account, the document locator needs to be updated. Just like it's important to occasionally review your wills, trusts and beneficiary designations, the same thing applies to your document locator.

It is also important that you let someone know

where you keep your document locator. After all, if your loved ones can't locate it, it's really not worth anything. My recommendation is that the person that you trust the most, the one that you've named in your power of attorney or to be the trustee of your trust, should know where this document is located. Making a document

locator is relatively simple and easy. You can either do it on the computer or you can do it the old-fashioned way by taking pencil to paper.

The bottom line is that it is important for everyone to make sure they have a listing of assets, legal documents and professional advisers so that when something happens, life can be as easy

as possible on your loved ones. After all, isn't that the real reason why we do any estate planning? Good luck!

Rick Bloom is a fee-only financial adviser. His website is www.bloomassetmanagement.com. If you would like Rick to respond to your questions, please email him at rick@bloomassetmanagement.com.

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Her hobby leads to teaching belly dancing



By LeAnne Rogers
Observer Staff Writer

When it came to exercise, Abida Blaze loved to run, but running became a problem after she was in a car accident.

"I suffered whiplash. I was looking for something more gentle, not a lot of jumping and throwing yourself around," said Blaze, who decided to take a belly dancing class in 2002. "I joined purely out of curiosity."

It became more than a hobby. Since 2007, Blaze has taught belly dancing full-time, including current classes for the Wayne-Westland Parks and Recreation Department.

"There is no typical student. I have high school students. My oldest student didn't tell me her age but was at least 70 years old," said Blaze, an Allen Park resident.

"I get all sorts of people who have injuries and want to regain strength or someone who has had a child and wants to get back in shape."

Some students are trained in other styles of dancing, such as ballet, and want to learn something different, she said.

"My students are mostly women. I get a few men and they are very welcome," said Blaze. "Men do belly dance in the Middle East — they just do it to different music."

There are different styles of belly dancing, she said, basically tribal or cabaret, the latter covering Greek, Arabic and Lebanese dancing styles.

"There are so many sub-styles, they are similar but you can see differences. The costumes can be different," said Blaze.

For beginning students, Blaze recommends an eight-week commitment.

"Over four to eight weeks, I hope people feel a little comfortable," she said. "Other people love it and practice every day, so they are good in a couple of weeks. It depends on physical ability and other dance you've had."

Along with the beginning class, Blaze also offers a level two classes for students based on her assessment of their skills.

For classes, she said students should wear comfortable clothes, such as T-shirts and tank tops.

Blaze encourages her students to join her in performing, normally at benefits and fund-raisers.

"It lets them participate, more advanced students will do professional performances," she said.



Belly dancing instructor Abida Blaze.

An upcoming benefit performance will be Saturday, Dec. 1, for Little Dresses for Africa to raise money for materials to make sun dresses for African girls. The performance is at the Royal Oak Women's Club.

For those who'd like to give belly dancing a try, Blaze is offering a free trial lesson at the Wayne Community Center on Monday, Dec. 17.

Along with teaching in Wayne and also Redford, Blaze will be teaching at the Center for Life Long Learning in Dearborn Heights, where she took her first belly dancing class.

For more information, visit www.blazingbellydance.com.

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PHOTOS BY STEPHEN CANTRELL | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Abida Blaze teaches belly dancing at the Wayne Community Center.



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When Elaine Cash decided it was time to move to a senior community, she found what she was looking for in her own backyard at Abbey Park at Mill River. Born and raised on a farm just three miles away, Elaine watched the construction of Abbey Park and carefully considered the advantages offered by the community.

As the final stages of building were completed "It got me thinking," she said. "I decided, on my own, this was the answer."

Elaine knew it was time for a change; the family home that she and her husband, Jim, built in 1950 was no longer practical. The Cash Family has lived in

Lyon Township, a picturesque rural setting noted for the warmth of loving neighbors, for six generations. Moving into Abbey Park keeps Elaine close to friends and family and provides security, support and reassurance to loved ones concerned about her living alone.

While Elaine made the move to satisfy the concerns of her family, she is quick to acknowledge that she is very happy in her new home. "I am blessed to have made a best friend here," Elaine said. "I never thought I would spend my later years in such a lovely home as Abbey Park. I feel like the luckiest person living here."



SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Abbey Park at Mill River resident Elaine Cash enjoying the beautiful grounds of Abbey Park at their annual car show.

MY VERY PLEASANT SURPRISE

Just minutes from Ann Arbor, Novi and Brighton, Abbey Park's convenient location – on Milford Road across from Coyote Golf Club and just minutes from I-96 – enjoys a beautiful countryside setting, with state of the art amenities in addition to quick access to three major hospitals.

Within just a few days of Abbey Park's opening in January 2009, Elaine and her three children enjoyed a lunch and tour of the facility. She was surprised and "very impressed," with her initial visit. Elaine appreciated the beautiful landscaping of the grounds and courtyards, an elegant lobby featuring fountains, fireplaces, and a grand piano along with the welcoming

smiles of a few old friends and some new neighbors.

With any move there are decisions to be made, and so after offering the family home to her granddaughter, Elaine's first step was to find the perfect apartment in her new community. With nine floor plans ranging from one bedroom/one bath to two bedrooms with two full baths and two walk-in closets, all apartment options at Abbey Park include

a balcony or patio. Monthly rental fees include heat, water, electricity in addition to 24-hour staffing, medical monitoring, daily housekeeping, weekly laundry service, delicious meals served in the beautiful Grand Dining Room, continental breakfast and over 45 activities – including two happy hour events and live entertainment – to enjoy each week.

There were additional surprises, too: the community was luxurious and elegant but also very affordable. The meals served in the elegant dining room by attentive staff and prepared on site, were delicious. "The food is like a nice restaurant," Elaine said, and said that the employees and residents are, "Like another large family." There's a calendar full of weekly shopping trips, monthly casino excursions, Bingo, ice cream socials and destination outings, such as trips

"I never thought I would spend my later years in such a lovely home as Abbey Park. I feel like the luckiest person living here."

Elaine Cash, Abbey Park resident

to Frankenmuth and holiday shopping trips. Within the community, there is a theater, library, computer center, fitness center, hair salon and physical therapists on site. Medicare-certified optional personal care services are also available.

every Sunday, birthday parties, Grandkids Halloween Carnival, Grandparent's Day Luau, Oktoberfest and Abbey Park's Festival of Trees. There's a delicious menu for each holiday and celebration dinners are open to family and friends. Abbey Park at Mill River offers a Facebook page that is updated after each event for the enjoyment of the residents and their loved ones.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE MY NEW HOME

Elaine was quick to credit the leadership of the staff with the spirit of community and a calendar full of celebrations. "To me, [Administrator] Tamra Ward and [Hospitality Director] Charles Duty are 'Abbey Park,' plus of course, their wonderful, friendly, caring staff." Elaine's social calendar is full of parties and events. There's a champagne brunch

Soon after her move to Abbey Park at Mill River, Elaine met owners Dr. Benjamin Stein, Joe Norber and Edward Rosenbaum during one of their weekly site visits. "I told them how much I loved it here," Elaine said "I am a walking commercial for Abbey Park."

Elaine celebrated her third anniversary as a resident at Abbey Park in September and enjoys being part of the Abbey Park family. "I have loved every single day here," she said.



Left: Abbey Park at Mill River resident Elaine Cash is surrounded by family at last year's Christmas party.

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MARTIN

Continued from page B1

his worth with a 71-yard punt return and added a kickoff return for 54 more.

Those numbers are of no surprise for those who followed Martin in the collegiate ranks.

In 48 games, the four-year letter winner finished his career ranked second in Michigan State history in punt return yards (659), fourth in punt returns (65), eighth in kick return yards (1,100) and kick returns (47), 10th in all-purpose yards (4,013), 11th in receptions (127), 16th in receiving yards (1,714)

and tied for 17th in touchdown receptions (10).

"It's a little bit more on my plate, but I can handle it," Martin said of his new duties as a return man. "I just try to make plays out there. I go out there every week, try to get better and make plays."

"It's a little different, but as far as catching the ball and reading the blocks, I felt like you should always be able to do that. The guys close down on you faster. People are faster, so you've really got to be on it."

As a rookie, Martin's transition to the NFL remains work in progress.

"I definitely felt like I learned something every

week," Martin said.

"Every week I'm just getting more comfortable just playing out there, making plays. Most of all, just having fun out there."

Martin specifically can't recall any specific Thanksgiving moment, but he was generally in front of the TV set.

"I used to watch the Lions on Thanksgiving, that's basically the only memory I have," Martin said. "I was a Lions fan. That's the home team, so you've got to have a little love for the home team. I watched the Lions growing up."

Martin is looking forward to Thanksgiving gathering. The majority will be Lions' fans, but he'll have his minority of supporters in the stands at Ford Field.

"Just going back home, just being back in Michigan and being in an envi-



HOUSTON TEXANS
Westland John Glenn grad Keshawn Martin (82), now a rookie wide receiver and kick returner for the Houston Texans, looks for running room in a game against Green Bay.

ronment, the opportunity to go out there and get another win, it definitely should be a good time," Martin said. "You've got a lot of family coming to the game and a lot of friends who want to come to the game, so I'll just do my best trying to get people to game. It should be a good environment, a good atmosphere. It should be exciting."

Martin hauled in a 9-yard first-quarter pass last Sunday from quarterback Matt Schaub in the OT win over Jacksonville for his first NFL touchdown.

And the Texans' rookie admitted he didn't quite know how to celebrate.

It remains a blur.

"I didn't know what to do, so I think I just spiked it," Martin said.

Another touchdown, along with a win this Thursday over the Lions would certainly be a Thanksgiving to remember for the Glenn grad — a feast with all the stuffings and a piece of pumpkin pie for dessert.

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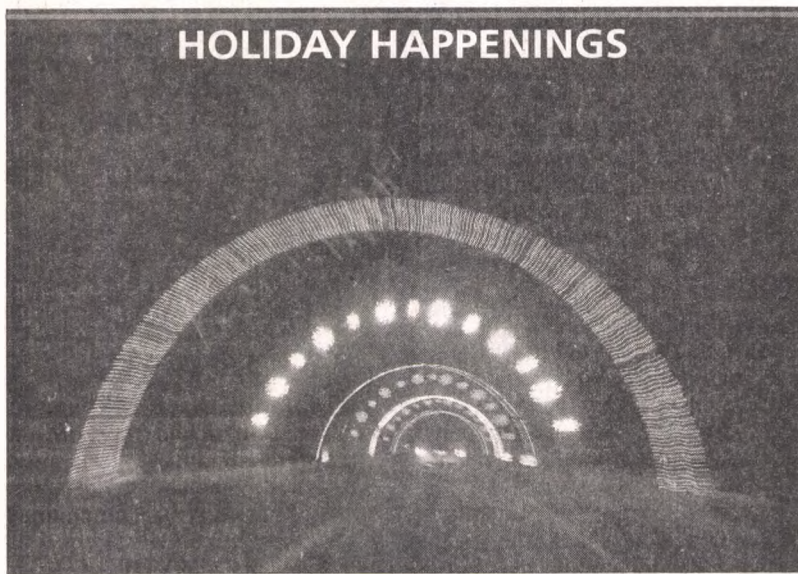
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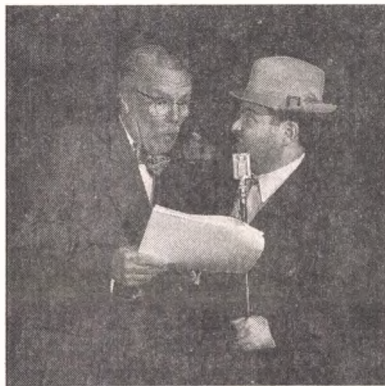
Wayne County Lightfest features a drive-through light show in Westland.

Mark your calendar for these holiday activities

It's time to get into the holiday spirit. Here's a sampling of local displays and shows:

Community

- See more than 70 Christmas trees through Jan. 2, 2013 at the Walk of Trees in Kellogg Park, in downtown Plymouth. Gingerbread houses will be on display at local businesses from Nov. 23-Dec. 23. Vote for your favorite house and be entered into a drawing for gift certificates. www.plymouthmich.org.
- Northville's Winter Market will run noon-8 p.m. Dec. 1 and noon-4 p.m. Dec. 2, in downtown Northville. The event will feature a carousel, ice carvings, greens market, fine art and craft booths, visits with Santa, and more. For more information visit www.downtownnorthville.com.



Jim Moll (left) and Keith Firstenberg, both of Farmington Hills, rehearse "1940's Radio Hour" at the Farmington Players Barn.

- Holly Days runs 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1 in downtown Farmington. A greens and gifts market will be held at the Sundquist Pavilion. See free movies at the Civic Theater and watch a tree lighting at the Warner Mansion. See Santa, ice carving, make holiday crafts and more. www.downtownfarmington.org.

Historical

- Holiday Nights at Greenfield Village in Dearborn runs 6:30-10 p.m. Dec. 1, 7-8, 14-16, 18-23 and 26-27, at the Village, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. Historical buildings and houses will be decorated for the holidays. The event also features ice skating, carousel rides, live entertainment, horse-drawn carriages and Model T cars, along with Santa and his reindeer. Tickets are \$17 for adult members and \$12.75 for youth members; \$20 for non-member adults and \$15 for non-member youth. Get tickets by calling (313) 982-6001 or visit www.thehenryford.org.
- Plymouth Historical Museum is all decked out for a "A Dickens of a Christmas," 1-4 p.m. Wednesday, Friday-Sunday, through Dec. 22, at the Museum, 155 S. Main,

Plymouth. The exhibit celebrates the life of Charles Dickens. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children, 6-17. An open house, with craft and bake sales, runs 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1 with free admission. Call (734) 455-8940 for more information.

Lights

• Wayne County Lightfest runs 7-10 p.m. everyday (except Dec. 25) through Dec. 31. See holiday light displays along Hines Drive in Westland. Cost is \$5 per vehicle. Enter Lightfest at 7651 Merriam, in Westland. (734) 261-1990

Music

• The Livonia Symphony presents "Holiday Happenings" 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, at Clarenceville High School, located on Middlebelt, between Seven Mile and Eight Mile in Livonia. The show will feature dancers from Angie Hahn's Academy of Dance, the Livonia Civic Chorus and members of the Livonia Youth Symphony. Tickets are \$20 and \$10 for students. www.livoniasymphony.org.

• The Madrigal Chorale (formerly the Madrigal Chorale of Southfield) will present its holiday concert at 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 1 at Old St. Mary's Church, 646 Monroe, at St. Antoine in Greektown, Detroit. Tickets are \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door and \$25 for reserved seating. Tickets are \$10 for student groups of 10 or more. For tickets, call (248) 804-1377; e-mail to yourmcs@yahoo.com; visit mcsnotes.org.

• The Fort Street Chorale will perform Handel's *Messiah*, 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 2, in historic Fort Street Presbyterian Church, 631 W. Fort, at Third, in downtown Detroit. Tickets are \$20 for general admission. Group rates and patron seating also are available. Free, secure parking. Call (313) 961-4533 or go to www.fortstreet.org.

• Canton Concert Band's annual Christmas show will be 7 p.m. Dec. 9, at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill, Canton. Tickets are \$10. Buy online at www.canton-mi.org/villagetheater.

• Farmington Community Band performs its holiday concert, 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, at Harrison High School, 29995 12 Mile, Farmington Hills. Admission is free. Visit www.fcbmusic.org.

• BeckRidge Chorale will present its 40th annual holiday concert, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 11, at the Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill, Canton. Tickets are \$16. For tickets visit www.beckridgechorale.org or call (888) 459-4887.

Accessible opera

New theater company stages holiday show

By Sharon Dargay
 O&E Staff Writer

Noelle Jacquez wants to make opera accessible and appealing to all ages. "I'd say if you've gone to opera before and didn't have the best experience, try again. Hopefully you'll find you do like it." The Plymouth woman says opera can seem "magical" with just the right mix of costume, set, song and story — and she knows just where to find it.

A little more than six months after founding the Main Street Opera Theatre, Jacquez and her cast and crew will stage their first opera, Gian Carlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* for one day, Saturday, Nov. 24, on the Village Theater stage in Canton.

Jacquez will sing the part of Amahl's mother. Francisco Fiori of Ann Arbor, a member of the Ann Arbor Boy Choir, will play Amahl. Other performers include professional singers, university students and graduates, a teacher, choir members and a few high school students. Jacquez' father, Albert Jacquez of Plymouth, a former member of the 1960s-era rock band, Savage Grace, takes on the role of the Page.

Jacquez began auditioning singers for her new theater in September, after securing the Village Theater at Cherry Hill for the upcoming show.

"Jennifer Tobin (Canton arts coordinator) was so helpful and excited about an opera company in our area. Our mission was different than any other company she had worked with."

Jacquez said *Amahl and the Night Visitors* is an "excellent choice" for the theater's debut because it's a one-act opera sung in English. It's also just 50 minutes long.

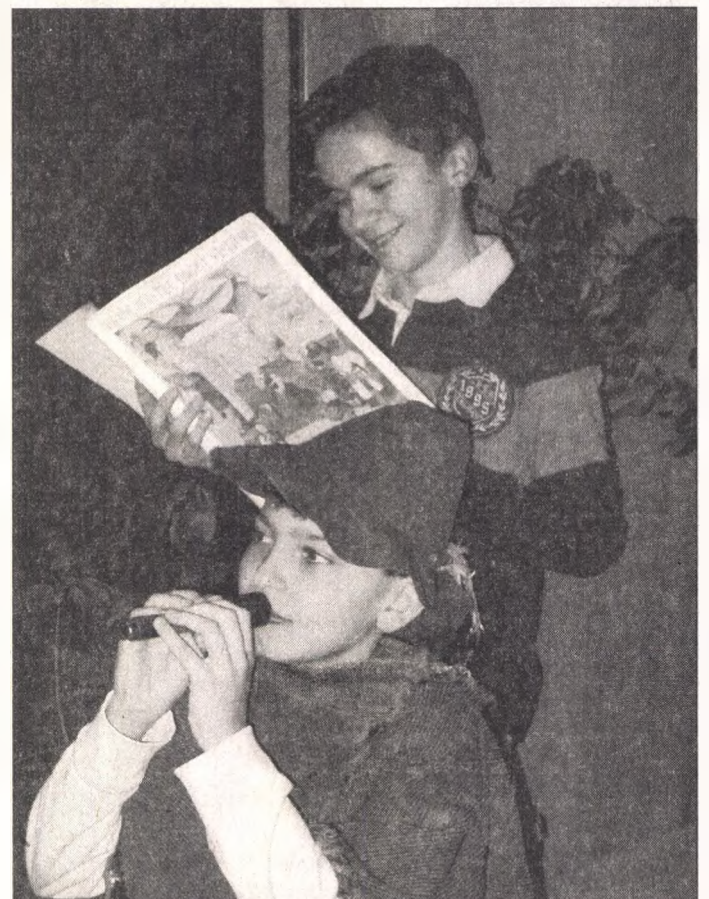
"Adults definitely will enjoy this show. Seniors also," she said. "All of our children's shows will be in English. I don't think we'd ever do a show that is not accessible to the entire family. That's our goal, it's accessible to everyone."

Opera student

Jacquez began singing opera while in high school at Interlochen. She initially planned to study musical theater, but the program was filled. She switched to the opera program, received a scholarship and "from that point on it was opera."

She earned a bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn. and took graduate classes in voice performance from Indiana University. She returned to Michigan in 2007, completed graduate degree requirements in foreign language — French, German and Italian — and attained her master's degree in voice performance last year from Indiana U.

She teaches private voice and piano lessons and performs at the Eagle Tavern during Greenfield Village's annual Holiday Nights program. She sang last year



Francisco Fiori, (foreground), a singer with the Ann Arbor Boy Choir, plays Amahl and John Paul Boudreaux is his understudy, in the Main Street Opera Theatre production of "Amahl and the Night Visitors." Boudreaux also sings with the Old St. Patrick's Boy Choir.



The cast of the opera, "Amahl and the Night Visitors," rehearses for two performances, Saturday, Nov. 24, at the Village Theatre at Cherry Hill in Canton.

with the Michigan Opera Theatre and has worked backstage at the Arbor Opera Theatre. She also sings in the choir and participates in shows at Northridge Church in Plymouth.

Community connection

"It's been a long time coming, thinking about it and wondering what path to take to be a singer," she said, describing her journey from student to opera theater founder. "I still have a strong community connection. As an opera singer you travel a lot. It's hard to have a family and a connection to the community."

Her path became clear after an airplane crash in 2006 killed several music students she knew while at Indiana University. The tragedy showed how "short and unexpected life can be."

"That's when I moved home and decided how to incorporate opera into my life. It was clear to me I wanted to have a family and be more connected to family. I had always thought about having my own company to do shows that I feel passionate about, and to work with kids...having them experience how fun opera can be."

She hopes to stage another opera in the summer and

MAIN STREET OPERA THEATRE

What: A new opera company in Plymouth will present "Amahl and the Night Visitors" for one day only
When: 4:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 24
Where: The Village Theater at Cherry Hill, 50400 Cherry Hill, Canton
Details: The one-act opera tells the story of Amahl, a poor, handicapped boy, who lives with his mother in a village on the road to Bethlehem. When the three kings following the star in the East seek shelter for the night, the lives of Amahl and his mother are changed forever. The show is 50 minutes and is aimed at all ages
Tickets: \$12 for youth, \$17 for seniors and \$20 for adults. They're available at (734) 394-5300, ext. 3 and at http://www.canton-mi.org/villagetheater/performance_glance.aspx

involve high school students as interns in the program. "One of our big goals is to get young people involved in all aspects."

For more information about Main Street Opera Theatre, visit www.mainstreetoperatheatre.org



Two Muses Theatre presents "Greetings!" Nov. 23-Dec. 16 at the Barnes & Noble theater space in West Bloomfield. The cast includes Angela Kay Miller, (left, top row) and Stephen Blackwell; Jan Cartwright, (left, middle row) and Henry Nelson and Richard Payton, (front row).

Will he win?



PHOTO COURTESY OF DISNEY-ABC

Steve Carpenter, a 2004 Livonia Stevenson High School graduate, appears with Meredith Vieira in an episode of the game show, "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." The show will be broadcast locally at noon, Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 22, on WWJ (CBS). Carpenter, the son of David and Linda Carpenter of Livonia, is a 2007 Michigan State University graduate who teaches Spanish at Simeon Career Academy in Chicago, Ill. He also volunteered for two years in the Peace Corps in Nicaragua. If he wins big on the show, he plans to get contact lenses, visit the dentist, travel to Spanish-speaking countries and buy his parents a motor home. For more about the show, visit www.millionaire.tv.com

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Sweet and Savory Bruschetta



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Overnight Breakfast Casserole

Serves: 12

2 packages (12 ounces each) Johnsonville Original Breakfast Sausage Links
6 English muffins, cut into 1-inch cubes
¼ cup butter, melted
1 cup (4 ounces) cheddar cheese, shredded
1 cup (4 ounces) mozzarella cheese, shredded
½ cup onion, chopped
½ cup red pepper, chopped
12 large eggs
2 cups milk
¼ teaspoon salt
Pepper to taste
¼ cup bacon bits

Cook sausage according to package directions. Cool slightly; cut into ¼-inch pieces. In greased 13-inch by 9-inch baking dish, layer half the English muffin cubes and half the cooked sausage. Repeat layers. Drizzle with butter and top with cheese, onion and red pepper.

In large bowl, combine eggs, milk, salt and pepper. Pour over casserole. Sprinkle with bacon. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Remove from refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Uncover and bake at 350°F for 45 to 50 minutes, or until knife inserted into center comes out clean.

Let stand 5 minutes.

Sweet & Savory Bruschetta

Makes: 16 pieces
Serves: 6 to 8

2 ripe tomatoes, diced
½ cup diced sweet pineapple
4 ripe strawberries, stemmed and diced
¼ cup julienned fresh basil leaves, (about 4 large leaves)
¼ cup julienned fresh mint leaves, (or ½ teaspoon dried)
3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
1 12-ounce package Johnsonville Original Breakfast Sausage Patties



Amazing Breakfast Muffin Cups



Overnight Breakfast Casserole

1 thin baguette, sliced
½ cup olive oil
8 slices fresh mozzarella, cut in half
Make bruschetta topping: In bowl, mix together tomatoes, pineapple, strawberries, basil, mint and maple syrup. Stir to combine. Cover and set aside.

Divide each of the 8 sausage patties in two and pinch edges to shape into smaller patties. Cook according to package directions, set aside. Cover to keep warm.

Place oven rack in top-third section of oven and set oven to broil. Slice baguette into 16 slices (about ½-inch

thick) and brush one side with olive oil. Place baguette slices, oiled side down, on a cookie sheet and broil for 1 to 2 minutes, or until golden. Watch carefully — they can go from not-quite-golden, to burned, in 15 seconds. Using tongs, flip slices over so oiled sides are up. Add 1 slice of mozzarella to each slice; broil 1 minute longer until cheese is melted and edges of baguette slices are beginning to look toasted.

Transfer to a serving platter or individual plates. Top each with 1 small sausage patty. Spoon bruschetta topping over each, allowing some to spill over. Serve immediately.

Breakfast Pizza

Makes: 12 to 16 pieces
Serves: 6 to 8

1 package (12 ounces) Johnsonville Maple Syrup Breakfast Sausage Links
1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls
1 cup refrigerated or frozen hash brown potatoes, thawed
1 cup (4 ounces) cheddar cheese, shredded
4 large eggs
¼ cup milk
¼ teaspoon dried basil
1 dash cayenne pepper
½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated

Place sausage on a 15 by 10- by 1-inch baking pan. Bake at 375°F for 15 to 20 minutes or until sausage is no longer pink, turning once; drain and slice into ½-inch coins.

Unroll crescent roll dough; separate into eight triangles. Arrange on an ungreased 12-inch pizza pan, placing points to the center. Press seams together and press over the bottom and up the sides of pan to form a crust.

Top with hash browns, sausage and cheddar cheese.

Combine eggs, milk and spices; pour over cheese. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Bake at 375°F for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a knife inserted near center comes out clean.

Amazing Breakfast Muffin Cups

Makes: 12 muffin cups
Serves: 12

3 cups hash browns, thawed
3 tablespoons melted butter
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
12 links Johnsonville Original breakfast sausage
6 eggs
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded 4-cheese Mexican blend cheese
¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
Fresh chives or green onions, chopped

In bowl, combine hash browns, butter, salt and pepper. Press mixture onto bottom and up sides of 12 greased muffin cups. Bake at 400°F for 12 minutes or until lightly browned.

Meanwhile, cook sausage according to package directions; cut into ½-inch pieces. Divide sausage among muffin cups. Combine eggs, cheese and bell pepper. Spoon over sausage. Sprinkle with chives. Bake for 13 to 15 minutes or until set.

Option: This recipe can be doubled to make Jumbo Breakfast Muffin Cups. Press hash brown mixture into 12 greased jumbo muffin cups. Bake crust for 12 minutes. Fill cups and bake 22 to 24 minutes or until set.

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We're transforming the future of healthcare by combining medical excellence with the latest technology and unparalleled compassion. And soon after the opening of the new addition in our south wing, we are renovating our north wing patient rooms to private.

Experience the new St. Mary Mercy.
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