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SUNDAY
May 8, 2005

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Feds pick Westland for new health center

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Westland will be home to a new, federally funded clinic that will provide health care for people who have little or no medical insurance. Federal officials selected Westland and Detroit as new sites for the program.

"It will provide a nice service to residents," Westland Mayor Sandra Cicirelli said. "Every single day, people are losing their health benefits. The numbers just keep growing."

Westland's clinic will be located in Oakwood Healthcare System facilities near Palmer and Merriman, Cicirelli said.

Oakwood will receive an annual \$650,000 grant to operate the Western Wayne Family

Health Center (WWFHC). It will provide primary care, mental health services, dental care and an on-site pharmacy.

Oakwood announced that the clinic is expected to open early next year.

"This is the only federally qualified health center in the western Wayne area," said Tom Kochis, WWFHC board vice president and Oakwood Annapolis Hospital division president. "That's important, because it allows the center the opportunity to serve a large group of residents who previously couldn't access primary health care - and we're offering these services right in their neighborhood."

Initial projections indicate that the clinic will serve 6,000 patients each year.

Although the clinic will be in Westland, it also

is targeted to serve other western Wayne County communities.

"With the creation of the new center, WWFHC's physicians and employees will provide accessible, affordable health care," WWFHC board President Patric Wimberly said. "No patient will be turned away."

Until now, all similar clinics have been located nearly 20 miles away in Detroit. The Westland facility will bring services closer and provide free transportation to those who need it.

"Wayne County needs federally qualified health centers, and the funding for a new clinic in Westland is welcome news," Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano said, in a press release from Oakwood. "Our residents, including those with no health insurance, are gaining improved

access, quality care and a convenient location."

U.S. Rep. Thaddeus McCotter, R-Livonia, called the project "a victory for the uninsured and under-insured citizens," and he said it will help ease the number of people crowding hospital emergency rooms.

U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Michigan, issued a statement saying that such facilities "provide a basic safety net for uninsured families."

According to Oakwood, research indicates that residents living in the WWFHC service area are at high risk for a number of diseases and health problems, such as cancer, coronary heart disease and low birth-weight babies.

dclem@oe.hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2110

'If I had a hammer



John Glenn junior Mike Holtzman (left) and Wayne Memorial senior Chris Singles work on cutting the posts for the foot bridge.

PHOTOS BY TOM HOFFMEYER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

City, Career Tech Center team up to build bridges

BY SUE MASON
STAFF WRITER

Martel Moon wore the rubber boots, so he got the job of standing at the water's edge as students nailed boards together to create the support beams for a bridge.

"I fell in twice," he said. "My boots filled up with water."

Moon is a junior at Wayne Memorial High School and a student in the first-year construction trades class at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center.

While his second-year counterparts are building a house on Avondale east of Wildwood, Moon and his classmates have been working on two wooden bridges spanning a small creek on the east side of the Bailey Recreation Center.

"I like working with my hands, it's fun building stuff and working outside," he said. "Plus you get paid a lot."

GOOD EXPERIENCE

According to instructor John Warra, Terry Smith, a foreman with the Parks and Recreation Department, asked if he and his students would be interested in building two bridges. Warra didn't hesitate in saying yes.

"It's community service and it's good to put on a resume," he said.

According to Parks and Recreation Director Robert Kosowski, the project came out of a meeting with Westland Summer Festival chairman Kenneth Mehl to talk about moving the



Career Technical Center students work as a team on one of two bridges being built east of the Bailey Recreation Center.

PLEASE SEE BRIDGES, A3

Workshop helps teens prepare for employment

Westland youths are being invited to attend a seminar that can help them prepare for the workplace.

The event will occur at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 18, at the senior citizen Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh south of Ford.

It is being sponsored by the Westland Chamber of Commerce and the Westland Youth Assistance Program, which pairs troubled youths with mentors and which provides services and programs to help

youngsters.

The first part of the seminar will involve "break-out" sessions to discuss how to dress for an interview; how to behave during an interview; how to use references effectively; how to properly fill out a job application; and developing a good work ethic.

The second part will feature business representatives conducting mock interviews with youngsters.

Organizers say the two-hour event will

serve as a useful learning experience for those who attend.

New to this year's seminar, organizers have asked local business owners to join the program to recruit summer help. There will be tables set up for employers to bring applications and to talk with potential applicants.

To reserve a spot at the seminar, call the Westland Youth Assistance Program at (734) 467-7904.

Thousands line up to apply for federal housing assistance

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Thousands of low-income people lined up outside of a Westland city building on Wednesday to sign a waiting list for federal housing assistance.

Thousands more showed up Thursday - the second and final day to apply for Section 8 assistance at the Dorsey Community Center, near Venoy and Palmer.

"We believe we will have 6,000 or 7,000 people total," Westland Housing Director James Gilbert said late Thursday morning.

Eager applicants camped out Tuesday night amid hopes that they will qualify for federal help, Gilbert said.

Despite huge numbers of people, the crowd was described by Gilbert as mostly well-behaved, compared to some cities that have experienced scuffles and heated exchanges among applicants.

"It's probably one of the best-managed waiting lists in the state," he said.

Last week marked the first time that Westland has hosted a Section 8 signup since July 2000.

Police Chief Daniel Pfannes said he was pleased with the way the crowds behaved.

"To have 5,000 people in such close proximity and not to have any major incident - from the police department's perspective, I couldn't be happier about it," Pfannes said.

A typical Section 8 recipient in Westland receives \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year - an amount that makes it worthwhile for people to stand in line to seek help, Gilbert said.

The amount they can receive depends on family size and their monthly rent, he said. "As their income goes up, their subsidy goes down."

Nearly 1,000 Westland residents, including many senior citizens and Norwayne subdivision residents, receive Section 8 assistance, Gilbert said.

He credited city police, firefighters and other employees with helping to maintain order outside the Dorsey Community Center.

Gilbert estimated that it could take six months to a year just to process the applications received last week.

"Westland residents will get priority," he said.



RONALD PONKEY

Westland police officers were on hand Wednesday as an estimated 4,000 people waited to apply for Section 8 assistance at the Dorsey Community Center.

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Fund-raiser to help family buy van for wheelchair-bound teen

BY DAN WEST
STAFF WRITER

Like any other teenager, Dean Olivas is growing. He needs new clothes and supplies to support his growth.

Unlike most teenagers, however, Dean suffers from an ailment he's had since birth that requires the use of a wheelchair and a special family vehicle to transport him.

The 13-year-old, an eighth-grader at Riley Middle School, has arthrogryposis, a muscle disorder that is similar to multiple sclerosis, but it is not degenerative. The condition freezes his joints in place and limits his ability to move his arms and legs.

Dean is the middle of three children for Dean Sr. and Cathy Olivas. The couple recently purchased a power wheelchair to help Dean handle his growth and to help him move easier as he recovers from major surgeries. The machine is more comfortable for Dean, but now he struggles to fit into the family's van designed to transport him in his wheelchair.

"He has to tilt his head sharply to fit into the van now," Cathy Olivas said. "Someone has to sit in the back with him since there is no tie-down system for the wheelchair."

The Olivas family purchased this van and lift system in 1999, hoping it would last for many years. The van has become inadequate with the new discomforts for Dean, safety deficiencies and leaky hydraulic pumps. The family needs \$50,000 to purchase the



Linda and Dean Olivas help son Dean Jr. into their van. The hydraulic lift is worn and leaks hydraulic fluid.

properly equipped van they need.

"We were unable to anticipate that these new needs would result from Dean's most recent surgery," Cathy Olivas said. "Our financial situation has made it impossible for us to purchase the type of vehicle that would provide safe lifting and transportation of Dean in his power wheelchair."

SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE

Cub Scout Pack 876, based at Roosevelt Elementary School, is organizing a fundraiser to help the Olivas family. One of the Cub Scouts in the pack includes Dean's younger brother, Jonathan.

A spaghetti dinner and silent auction is scheduled for 4-8 p.m. Friday, May 13, at Riley Middle School, located at the corner of Five Mile and Henry Ruff. Admission is \$7 per person. Additional donations will be accepted.

Organizer Lisa Wirick said the goal is to collect enough donations of food and related supplies so all of the money collected at the event will go to the Olivas family.

"We're still looking for some help," Wirick said. "We still could use some food donations and other gift certificates and goodies for the auction."

Several Girl Scout troops will contribute by selling baked goods at the event to raise additional money for the Olivas family.

"We believe this is a great opportunity for our Scouts to learn about community service and how to help people in need," Wirick said.

OPTIMISTIC FUTURE

In the meantime, Dean is recovering from a series of major surgeries where bones were broken in his left leg to straighten it. He had a similar procedure done when he was



It's a tight fit in the family's old van for Dean Olivas Jr.

younger to straighten the right leg. Before these surgeries, he was able to get in and out of his wheelchair and walk a few steps. Cathy Olivas said her son could also move himself from the wheelchair to a seat in the back of the van before these surgeries.

During his recovery from this latest round of surgeries, his family remains hopeful that Dean's mobility will return with treatment and physical therapy. To treat his arthrogryposis, which affects one in 3,000 children, Dean has undergone nearly three dozen

PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

surgeries in the hope that he will be able to move without a wheelchair.

"The fact this is not a degenerative condition means it won't get worse," Cathy Olivas said. "Things might even improve for him."

Dean plans to go to college and learn to become a Web designer.

Anyone who can donate supplies for the dinner or who cannot attend the event, but wants to make a donation can call Lisa Wirick at (734)513-5953 or Julie Pepper at (734)422-0605. dwest@oe.homecomm.net | (734) 953-2109

Lawmakers rescue block grant money

BY DARRELL CLEM
STAFF WRITER

Fears have eased that Westland could lose \$1.2 million a year in federal aid for programs that help senior citizens, troubled youths, the police and fire departments, and low-income homeowners.

U.S. legislators have resoundingly snubbed President George W. Bush's proposal to gut the Community Development Block Grant program.

Bush had suggested seizing the CDBG program from U.S. Housing and Urban Development officials and shifting it, along with 16 other programs, to the Commerce Department.

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli confirmed Monday that local officials received word that the program will remain intact with HUD officials - a move that local leaders favored.

What's more, Cicirelli said federal legislators have actually boosted the CDBG program with an additional \$1.5 billion.

Westland City Council President Charles Pickering told the *Observer* in March that CDBG funds are tax dollars that are returned to local communities to help residents.

"And," he said, "it has been proven over the years that it helps our community provide services to those in need."

CDBG dollars have been used for many purposes in Westland, including revitalizing low-income homes; improving roads, public sidewalks and sewer systems; building a new fire station on the city's southeast side; building the senior citizen Friendship Center; and helping the Youth Assistance Program.

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BRIDGES

FROM PAGE A1

festival around in Tattan and Central City parks.

And it was Mayor Sandra Cicirelli who suggested contacting the construction trade classes at the Career Technical Center.

"They do tremendous work and it's great workmanship," said Kosowski. "If we hadn't had them do it, we would have had to try and build them ourselves and with the parks work and grass mowing, we couldn't have done it. Hopefully, this is the start of a good thing."

City workers installed the 6-inch-by-6-inch posts that support the bridge.

The city also provided the materials and hardware. In addition to providing the labor, the students did all the estimating for the materials and made phone calls to get prices, Warra said.

"At first the kids came up with the a couple of designs, but we were concerned about the weight," Warra said. "So we gave Terry the designs and he



Melvindale High School senior Jazzmine Fowkes (from left), John Glenn senior Shawn Fournier and Wayne Memorial senior Justin Keatts work help with the bridge railings.

gave it to the engineers. They did the weight."

In addition to the bridges, the students also have to build the ramps leading up to them

to make them handicap accessible. The ramps measure 12 feet in length. That measurement was determined by the bridge elevation. Every one

inch of elevation translated into one foot of ramp.

"The key is they have to look at it, plan it and execute it," added Justin Snider, Warra's

assistant. "When they're done, it gives them a sense of pride."

According to Warra, the first-year class teaches students how to build and all the steps necessary to build a house, while the second year, they take those skills they learned the first year and enhance them so they can build a house.

FOR THE KIDS

The first-year students usually help the second-year students with the house, but they also have a class project and hone their skills building playhouses.

The playhouses measure 8 feet by 9 feet and have porches. Basically, they look like a miniature house with shingles, windows and doors, Warra said.

And they're also for sale for \$1,300.

People interested in buying one can call Warra at (734) 419-2141.

"One of the secretaries at the center brought in a picture from a magazine and it looked like our playhouses," said Warra. "That one in the magazine cost \$5,400. She decided

to buy two of ours for her grandchildren."

As for the bridges, Warra said he's thinking about installing a wooden plaque to let people know who built them, but he hasn't gotten too far into that with good reason.

"I want to get the bridge done first," he said.

Kosowski is so impressed with the workmanship that his department is looking at some other projects to partner with the construction trades classes. One project might be an addition to the indoor golf facility at the municipal golf course on Merriman.

"The indoor golf has really exploded," said Kosowski. "During the winter, it's packed. We originally built an addition of three simulators, now even that is too small."

For now, the students and their instructors are glad to be doing the bridges.

"We like helping out and anything we do is a learning experience," said Warra. "It's better working outside. It's not as cramped a space. It's more open."

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Teen apologizes for joking 'death list'

A 13-year-old Holmes Middle School student has apologized for posting a Web page that included a "death list" of several students and staff at the school.

"The page dubbed 'Death List' was intended as a joke taken from the motion picture 'Kill Bill,'" the boy's online apology reads. "I really never expected anything like this to happen or for anyone to take offense."

School staff learned of the initial Web page Monday and notified parents of the four stu-

dents and the two staff members, according to Supt. Randy Liepa.

The site didn't include any threats or intention to kill or even harm anyone, said Lt. Greg Winn of the Livonia Police Department. "That's why it's not gone to the level of being considered a crime," Winn said.

The school resource officer at Holmes interviewed the boy and his parents, checked his locker and his home and found no intention of harm.

Liepa said no staff or stu-

dents were in danger at any time, but parents of those students named were notified as a courtesy. "Students weren't in harm's way, by any means," he said.

"We will follow up with discipline. We will go through the normal discipline process," Liepa said, noting that the boy did the appropriate thing by taking down the Web page.

To those he named in the note, the boy wrote: "...Please find it in your heart to forgive an idiot with some web space."

By Dave Varga

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FOR THE RECORD

DEATHS

B
Lydia A. Borsodi, of Livonia, died May 2.

E
Nancy S. Ellis, 52, of Westland, died April 29.

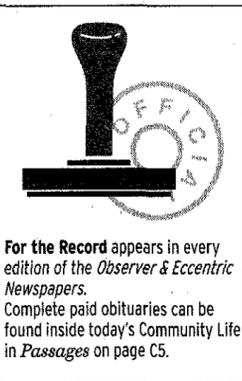
G
Garnieta "Jean" Gage, of Clarkston, died May 2.
Bob Gajda, 88, of Southfield, died April 24.
Marion Graller, of Plymouth, died April 25.
Laurel L. Gray, 70, of Westland, died April 25.
Ann J. Grayot, of Dearborn Heights, died April 18.
Michael Groves, 44, of Birmingham, died May 3.

H
Frederick E. Hodges, 73, of Howell, died April 19.
Dorothy I. Holcomb, 93, of Beverly Hills, died May 3.
Margaret E. Hood, 93, of Livonia, died April 30.

K
Irven J. Kaliszewski, of Westland, died May 1.
Susan G. Kotulak, of Milford, died April 21.
Harvey J. Krohn, of Westland, died April 23.

M
Duncan McPherson, 78, of Redford, died April 25.
Jack S. Messerschmitt, of Redford Township, died April 21.

N
Geraldine Helen Nagy, 79, of



For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's Community Life in Passages on page C5.

Plymouth, died April 26.

R
James R. Rorak Jr., 58, of Canton, died April 28.

S
Wanda Sabat, of Livonia, died May 4.
Mark Scott, 69, of Canton, died April 29.
Eleanor G. (Betty) Sprague, 85, of Louisville, Colo., formerly of Birmingham, died April 20.

V
Helen Campbell Van Dusen, 100, of Bloomfield Hills, died April 12.
John Van Wagoner, 79, of Plymouth, died April 19.

W
Jean Marie Wesley (Colpus), 85, of Green Bay, Wisc., formerly of Rochester died April 29.
Muriel F. Westman, 77, of Bloomfield Hills, died April 30.

E-mail updates

State Rep. Glenn S. Anderson, D-Westland, has away for Westland citizens to stay informed about important issues before the legislature in Lansing by the click of a mouse.

Anderson is sending out updates specific to three areas of concern for constituents: Education issues, senior issues and local government issues. Each update, sent via e-mail every two weeks, contains information on bills introduced in the House of Representatives, action taken by the House on key bills and other items of interest.

The legislative updates are provided free of charge as a public service. Anyone can subscribe to one or all of the updates by simply contacting Anderson's office via e-mail at glennanderson@house.mi.gov or by phone toll-free at (888) 833-8494.

Flea market

VFW Harris-Kehrer Post 3323 will sponsor an outdoor flea market 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, May 21, at its 1055 S. Wayne Road location. Cost is \$25 per parking space. No food or beverages may be sold. For more information, call (734) 812-7978.

Surplus food

The city will distribute surplus federal food 10 a.m. to 2

PLACES AND FACES

p.m. Thursday, May 19, at the Dorsey Community Center, on Dorsey south of Palmer and east of Venoy. That distribution will be for residents north of Michigan Avenue.

Residents south of Michigan should pick up their commodities on the third Monday of each month at St. James United Methodist Church, 30055 Annapolis, between Henry Ruff and Middlebelt.

Senior citizens in Taylor Towers should contact their building manager to learn when to pick up their food.

Food distributed in May will include green beans, mixed fruit, pineapple juice and pudding. For more information, call (734) 595-0366.

Need a pet?

The Michigan Humane Society will bring its mobile adoption until to Art Van Furniture, 8300 N. Wayne Road, noon to 4 p.m. Sunday, May 15.

For more information, call (866) MHUMANE. For a complete listing of mobile adoption events, go online at www.michiganhumane.org.

Memorial service

The Vermeulen Funeral Homes in Plymouth and Westland will hold two memorial balloon release services for people to pay tribute to their loved ones.

The services will be:
■ 7 p.m. Thursday, May 19, at the Vermeulen Funeral Home at 980 N. Newburgh, south of Ford, in Westland. For more information call (734) 326-1300.

■ 7 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at the Vermeulen Funeral Home at 46401 W. Ann Arbor Road, between Sheldon and Beck, in Plymouth. For more information call (734) 459-2250.

Each balloon release will include a presentation by licensed grief counselor Wes Baldwin.

Anyone planning to attend is asked to call ahead because the funeral home, in preparation for serving refreshments,

would like a head-count.

Curtain call

The City of Wane Arts and Entertainment Department Actors Community Theatre will present Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella at 8 p.m. Friday-Saturday, May 13-14 and 20-21, and 2 p.m. 2 p.m. Sunday, May 15, at the State Wayne Theater, 35310 Michigan Ave., Wayne. Tickets cost \$15 for adults, \$13 for students and senior citizens and \$8 for children.

For more information, call (734) 721-7400.

Free seminar

Kate Ferrett, hospital liaison for Arbor Hospice and Home Care, will speak about such issues as advanced directives in a presentation 5-6 p.m. Thursday, May 19, at Westland Convalescent Center.

Ferrett will discuss such topics as what are advance directives, when is it time to think about advance directives, who needs advance directives, what is the difference between advance directives and a living will and how to get started.

The seminar is free of charge and open to the public. Contact Judy Bianchi at (734) 728-6100 to sign up for this event.

Golf outing

The Westland Rotary Club will hold a Centennial Golf Celebration Thursday, May 26, at the Golden Fox at Fox Hills in Salem Township. The outing will have a scramble format and 11 a.m. shotgun start. It includes 18 holes of golf, lunch and beverages at the turn, door prizes and a filet mignon dinner and banquet.

The costs is \$160 per golfer or \$600 for a foursome. Sponsorships also are available. For more information, call Dr. Kim Shunkwiler at (734) 728-5533, Tom North at (734) 421-1300, Todd Blevins at (734) 425-7766 or Capt. Matt O'Neil at (734) 722-3660.

To register, send a check,

payable to Westland Rotary to the Rotary Golf Outing, Shunkwiler Chiropractic Health Center, 5978 N. Wayne Road, Westland, MI 48185. Proceeds will benefit the Salvation Army and Westland Rotary charities.

Off and running

North Brothers Ford and the City of Westland are sponsoring the seventh annual 5K Fun Run and Walk Saturday, May 14, for the benefit of the Karmanos Cancer Institute.

Runners and walkers collect donation in advance of the race/walk which will start at 9 a.m. at the Bailey Recreation Center.

Prizes and recognition will be awarded to the top three females and top three males in seven age groups - ages 1-10, 11-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 and over.

The registration fee is \$18. Registration starts at 8 a.m. on race day.

For more information, contact Erin Jackson at North Brothers Ford at (734) 524-1232.

Registrations can be sent to her attention at the dealership, 33300 Ford Road, Westland, MI 48185. Checks should be made payable to North Brothers Ford.

Meet the author

Native Detroitier Richard Bak, award winning author and historian, will discuss the history of the Civil War with an emphasis on Michigan's role during the tumultuous time when he speaks at the Wayne Public Library at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 26.

Bak has written numerous books about such subjects as the city of Detroit, Ty Cobb, Henry and Edsel Ford, Abraham Lincoln, Joe Louis, Lou Gehrig, the Detroit Red Wings and Tiger Stadium.

There is no charge for the program, however, seating is limited, so registration is required.

Call the library at (734) 721-7832.

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PRE-ENTERTAINMENT SPECIAL Thursday

ACHIEVERS

Karen Lang of Westland has been promoted to branch manager of Co-op Services Credit Union Dearborn office. Lang, who had served as assistant branch manager since 1999, replaces Patricia Zimmerman who recently retired from the credit union. "Karen has more than 10 years experience with Co-op Services and is very responsive to our members' needs," said Angie Krogol, senior vice-president of Member Services. Co-op Services Credit Union has approximately 43,000 members, maintaining branch offices in Dearborn, Livonia, Walled Lake, Westland and Downriver.

juris doctor degree during May 7 graduation of from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. She is a 1998 graduate of Garden City High School and received her bachelor of arts degree from Albion College in 2002. Torni is the daughter of William and Beverley Torni and the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Elijah Parks and MaryLou Torni.

Albion College student **Brett Braun** demonstrated his exceptional academic achievement by presenting an original research or creative project during the college's recent annual Elkin R. Isaac Research Symposium. Braun made a public presen-

tation of his project, titled "The Albion Malleable Iron Company: A History of Race, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomics." In addition, Braun received the Julian S. Rammelkamp Award in American History at the college's annual Honors Convocation, held during the Symposium. The award is given by the Albion College faculty and recognizes Braun's academic excellence. Braun is the son of Bruce Braun and Jayne Braun of Westland and a graduate of Lutheran High School. He is a senior majoring in history education and minoring in English education. He is completing the secondary education program.

Angela Hospice recognizes work done by its volunteers

Angela Hospice honored its more than 450 volunteers at its recent annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The dinner was held at Westland's Hawthorne Valley Country Club, where the meal and facility were donated in honor of the Angela Hospice volunteers. Receiving special recognition pins were volunteers who logged from 500-5,000 lifetime hours, or marked 5-15 years of service. Among those honored were Westland residents: Theresa Barron, Ed Dlugos, and Jennifer Pernicario for five years of service. Eve Esche for 1,000 lifetime service hours. Jane Neu for 2,500 hours.



Westland resident Jane Neu is congratulated by Angela Hospice President and CEO Sister Mary Giovanni for volunteering 2,500 hours of service to Angela Hospice in Livonia.

"Angela Hospice volunteers are a truly remarkable group of people who give from the heart," said Donna Kolodsick, Angela Hospice's Volunteer and Spiritual Care Manager. "Our volunteers do so much for Angela Hospice, and this is just one way for us to say thank you for their support." Volunteers support Angela Hospice in a variety of ways, including patient companion-

ship, mealtime assistance, bereavement support, spiritual care, clerical duties, gardening and flowering arranging, fundraising and event planning, and wherever any other help is needed. Volunteers logged more than

34,000 hours in 2004 alone, supporting Angela Hospice's programs of care. People interested in learn more about volunteering can call the Angela Hospice Volunteer Office at (734) 953-6049.

PRESCHOOLS

Preschool listings should be submitted in writing. They can be mailed to Sue Mason at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150, by fax at (734) 591-7279 or by e-mail at smason@oe.homecomm.net. For more information, call (734) 953-2112.

Willow Creek
Willow Creek Cooperative Preschool, on Cherry Hill between Newburgh and Wayne Road in Westland, is a non-profit co-op preschool for tots, 3 and 4 years old. It serves Westland, Canton and surrounding communities. The Moms and Tots program meets Friday mornings. Three-year-olds meet Tuesday and Thursday and four-year-olds meet Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Morning and afternoon sessions available. Call Lucy Arunachalam at (734) 453-5959.

Preschool program
The Wayne-Westland Community Schools district has registration for preschool programs at Stottlemeyer Early Childhood and Family

Development Center, on Marquette between Wayne and Wildwood. Included are an early intervention program, Head Start, Kids/Plus Preschool, a preprimary impaired program and Sparky Preschool. Registration takes place 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call (734) 419-2635.

McKinley
Looking for a great preschool? Choose McKinley Cooperative Preschool at 6500 N. Wayne Road in Westland. Nondiscriminatory and fully licensed, the program is open to youngsters ages 2-4. Morning and afternoon classes are offered. Call (734) 729-7222 or visit the Web site at www.mckinleypreschool.org.

Charter school
The Academy of Detroit-Westland, an entrepreneurial and business charter school, serves children in kindergarten through sixth grade. The school emphasizes basic education with business and entrepreneurial

skills and offers a foreign language class, music and art, a dress code and a computer lab with access to the Internet. Call (734) 722-1465 or (248) 569-7787.

Methodist
The Westland Free Methodist Preschool is now enrolling for the 2004-05 school year. Four-year-olds attend on Mondays and Wednesdays; three-year-olds attend on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Call the preschool office at (734) 728-3559. Office hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 9-11:30 a.m.

Garden City Co-op
Garden City Co-op Nursery, housed in the Garden City Presbyterian Church, 1841 Middlebelt at John Hawk, has openings in its programs for children 18 months to 4 years. The tots class meets on Wednesday mornings, while the older youngsters meet on Mondays and Thursdays. Parental involvement is required. Parents can call (734) 261-2838.

INFORMATION CENTRAL

Who is SAM and why is the reference staff so excited to meet him? Actually, SAM stands for Smart Access Manager and it is software meant to provide self-serve access to computer stations in the library. So what does this mean for people who come to the library for computer access? For starters, it means no more standing in line at the reference desk to sign up for a computer. All users have to do is walk up to an empty computer station and sign on using their library card. No library card? No problem. If someone is eligible for a card through The Library Network, he or she can get a 30-day temporary Westland card that will allow him or her computer access.

SAM. Currently, users are limited to one Internet session per day, which can be restricted to one hour. With SAM, users will have three sessions per day, up to one hour each. Although people will no longer be able to bring their own paper, all computers will have printing capabilities, with the option to print in color. Finally, we will be adding four new computer stations and all of the computers will have Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint in addition to the Internet. Look for SAM to arrive at the end of this month. If you have any questions about the system, call the William P. Faust Public Library of Westland at (734) 326-6123.

Teen Advisory Board: 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 10.
Help plan programs, choose prizes and materials for the Ten Collection. Call Rori at (734) 326-6123.

The William P. Faust Public Library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland.

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ULTRASOUND IMAGING IN ARTHRITIS

You may be familiar with ultrasound imaging in medicine. The procedure finds use in showing if blood vessels are open, how a pregnancy is progressing, and in revealing how well the heart pumps blood and the heart valves open and close. The principle on which all medical ultrasound works is that the ultrasound apparatus sends sound waves into the body. These waves bounce off the body's organs and reflect back to the ultrasound machine. Programming makes it possible for the ultrasound to create images on a screen that correspond to the part of the body being imaged. The same principles apply to joints and muscles. In the last 10 years ultrasound technology has developed so that imaging of joints, muscles, bones and the pathology that develops in them can be seen just like heart valves and the developing fetus. Because the cost of ultrasound, while more than x-ray is a tenth of that of MRI or CT scan, the countries of Europe, ever mindful of health care costs, have pioneered in applying ultrasound to muscle and joint conditions. For example, a MRI can reveal a rotator cuff tear at a cost of \$1200 while an ultrasound of the shoulder can make the same diagnosis for \$90. Because American medicine is becoming cost conscious, you can expect to see more use of ultrasound diagnosis in this country. Another benefit of this technique is that it can be done quickly in your doctor's office, rather than requiring an appointment to a facility or hospital, followed by a return appointment with your doctor.

www.drjweiss.yourmd.com

New programs and sites fuel Madonna's growth

BY DAN WEST
STAFF WRITER

Enrollment at Michigan's public universities has declined in recent years, but that has not been the case at Madonna University.

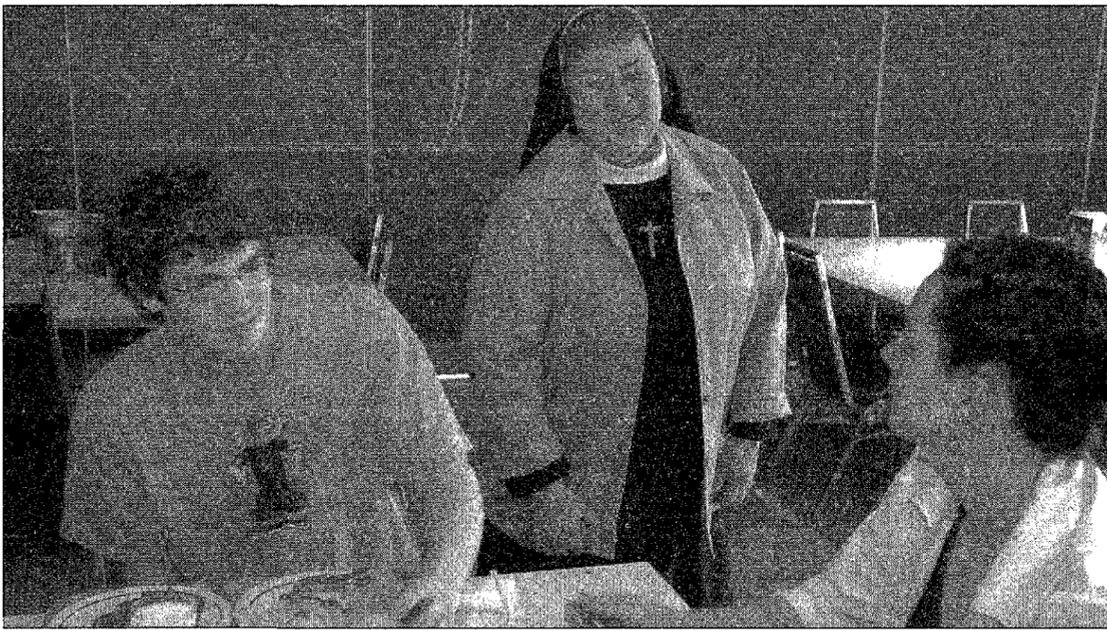
Fueled by new academic and athletic programs, the addition of two off-campus sites and a growing number of daytime students, the Livonia-based Catholic university has seen an 18 percent boost in enrollment over the past two years. This year's student count of 4,600 is an all-time high in the institution's 58-year history.

"In the 1970s and 80s, we were focused on the student learners so we directed a lot of our schedules and energies toward evening classes for our students after work," said Ernie Nolan, Madonna's vice president for academic administration.

"Now, we've expanded some programs which are attracting more of the traditional college students from age 18-22," he added. "Over the past four or five years, we've seen this number of our traditional students grow after they were at a plateau for a long time."

A decade ago, two-thirds of Madonna's students were professional learners who typically took evening courses. However, the university started to see enrollment declines in the mid-1990s, leading administrators to try new marketing strategies.

"We've grown some markets with the help of the Internet and recruiting through the community colleges," said Frank Hribar, vice president for planning and enrollment management, who added that 68 percent of Madonna's students transfer from community col-



Madonna University President Sister Rose Marie Kujawa chats with students Pat O'Callaghan, a secondary education major, and Deanna Dunsmore, who is studying occupational safety and fire science, during a lunch break.



Madonna University's student lounge is full at noon. Nursing seniors (from left) Kristina Guerin of Livonia, Danielle Lansu of Garden City and Deya Abdelbaki of Dearborn join others for a lunch break.

leges. "We work aggressively with Schoolcraft, Oakland County, Wayne County and Henry Ford community colleges, to name a few," Hribar said.

Madonna also opened an off-campus facility in Southgate in 2001 and took over St. Mary's College in Orchard Lake in 2003. Hribar said those moves helped the university's growth and boosted student enrollment to the point where the ratio of professional students to traditional students is about even.

LOCAL ALTERNATIVE

Madonna has also benefitted from metro Detroit students who choose to commute to Madonna as an economic alternative to going away to outstate universities. Some 80 percent of the school's students are from Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and Livingston counties.

"We've done a good job of providing comprehensive programs and balancing our limited resources so we can minimize tuition costs for our students," said Hribar, who added that Madonna's average annual tuition cost of \$9,700 a year (\$320 per semester hour) is the lowest rate among Michigan's private schools.

"A lot of the state universities have struggled with this balance in recent years, but we've had experience doing it for a number of years," Hribar said.

Madonna, Nolan added, intensified efforts in recent years to provide a "comfortable transition" for freshmen entering the university. In addition to orientation courses, the school also links subject matters in history and composition assignments so new students are not overwhelmed with the new environment.

BY THE NUMBERS: MADONNA UNIVERSITY

- 4,600 - Number of students attending Madonna facilities in Livonia, Orchard Lake and Southgate.
- 1947 - Year Madonna College was founded.
- 476 - Number of full-time and part-time staff.
- 47 - Number of nationalities represented among the student body.
- 6 - Number of women's varsity sports programs.
- 5 - Number of men's varsity sports programs.

PHOTOS BY BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



CITY OF GARDEN CITY ORDINANCE #05-003

AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE STRAIGHT FARMHOUSE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Historic Districts Act of the State of Michigan (Act 169 of 1970); Ordinance 74-001 of the City of Garden City; and the proceedings, recommendations and reports of the City of Garden City Historic District Study Committee;

THE CITY OF GARDEN CITY HEREBY ORDAINS:

The final report of the City of Garden City Historic District Study Committee on the proposed Straight Farmhouse Historic District is ADOPTED and the Straight Farmhouse Historic District is hereby ESTABLISHED. The legal description of said district is:

Folker's Garden City Acres Subdivision Number 18
T2S R9E L54 P56 WCR
10b283 to 2845 Lots 2838 to 2844 including E 1/2
Adj Vac Alley also Lot 2845 and w 1/2 Adj Vac Alley

The City Clerk is directed to file a copy of this Ordinance with the Wayne County Register of Deeds.

SEVERABILITY

The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph or part of this Ordinance shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts.

DATE OF EFFECT/ORDINANCE NUMBER

This Ordinance shall become effective on April 25, 2005, and shall be known as Ordinance No. 05-003.

JAYLEE LYNCH
Mayor

ALLYSON M. BETTIS
City Clerk-Treasurer

Adopted: April 25, 2005
Published: May 8, 2005
Resolution: 05-04-0360

Publish: May 8, 2005

050302481

BUDGET HEARING NOTICE

Academy of Inkster will be holding its annual budget hearing on May 16, 2005 at 5:30 p.m. The location will be at Charter School Administration Services, 20755 Greenfield Road, Suite 400, Southfield, MI 48075. The budget is available for public inspection at Academy of Inkster, 28612 Avondale, Inkster, MI 48141. The meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Publish: May 8, 2005

050302083



CITY OF GARDEN CITY NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

May 12, 2005

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Thursday, May 12, 2005, 2004 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, at the Civic Center, 6000 Middlebelt Road, Garden City, Michigan. At the hearing, all interested persons shall have an opportunity to be heard.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to solicit public comments on the following proposed Special Land Use:

ZA 05-003, Zoning Text Amendment, Proposed Text Amendment to 154.117, Wireless Communication Facilities, and 154.386, PR Public Recreation District. The amendment would allow Wireless Telecommunication uses as a Special Use within all districts.

Written comments may be submitted prior to the public hearing and should be addressed to: The Office of Community Development, City of Garden City, 6000 Middlebelt Rd., Garden City, MI 48135.

G. Palmer
Community Development Dir.

Publish: May 8, 2005

050302326

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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN (R)
2 PRINTS / 2 SCREENS (SAT/SUN 12:25) 12:50,
3:20, 3:45, 6:15, 8:40, 9:10, 9:35
HOUSE OF WAX (R)
12:55, 3:05, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45
FRI/SAT LS 12:00

THE NITCHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY (PG) 2 PRINTS / 2 SCREENS
(SAT/SUN 11:00) 12:45, 1:45, 3:00,
4:10, 5:20, 6:50, 7:35, 9:05, 9:50
FRI/SAT LS 11:20, 12:05

THE INTERPRETER (PG-13)
(SAT/SUN 11:05) 1:35, 4:15, 7:00, 9:30
FRI/SAT LS 11:55

MISS CONGENIALITY 2: ARMED AND FABULOUS (PG-13) 9:25 FRI/SAT LS 11:35
ROBOTS (PG)
FRI/MON-TH 1:55, 3:50, 5:50, 7:40
SAT 12:00, 1:55, 3:50, 5:50, 7:40
SUN 12:00, 1:55, 3:50, 7:40

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ONE-ON-ONE ATTENTION

Sophomore Heather Spooner, an education major and volleyball player from Brownstown Township, said she's loved the one-on-one attention she's received from her professors.

"It seems like everyone I've met here has a lot of energy," said Spooner, 19. "When I started here, it seems like everyone here was as excited to have me as I was to come here."

Spoooner added she selected Madonna for the chance to play collegiate volleyball, and because "it's far enough from home to move away, but it's still a short drive home," she said.

The school's most-popular educational programs are education, criminal justice, nursing and business. With the growth in students, Madonna officials plan to add more programs in the future. This year, the university added sports management, serving 50 students, and forensics science, serving 40.

"Our MBA (master's of business administration) program is growing and we hope to add more master's programs in the future," Nolan said. "We plan to add courses to certify teachers in physical education and coaching to our teacher certification program."

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Focus:HOPE journalism contest offers life lessons

For the past seven years, I have been one of the judges for Focus:HOPE's annual Journalism Challenge.

The program serves a couple of purposes. High school students from throughout the Detroit area visit the dynamic Focus:HOPE facilities on Oakman Boulevard in Detroit and write a story based on their experiences under the pressure of a deadline. Area journalists act as mentors to help the students fashion their stories. The stories are then judged by another group of journalists who select the best work for scholarships of \$2,000, \$1,000 and \$500 and another 12 \$50 awards.

While the scholarships are an important benefit for the students, the real purpose is to expose the students to the realities of urban life and a program that takes seriously the old adage that it is better to give a person a fishing pole and teach him to fish than to give him a fish dinner.

The best entries always focus on a personal story. Sometimes it's a story of triumph over poverty, apathy, drugs, bad decisions. Other times it's the story of an ongoing struggle where the outcome is still very much in doubt.

Focus:HOPE was founded after the riots of 1967 by the late Rev. William Cunningham and Eleanor Josaitis. While serving immediate needs with a grocery store and a day care center, Focus:HOPE also serves long-range needs with a number of job training programs, to help young people in the inner city redirect themselves toward getting well-paying technical jobs and encouraging them to pursue their education as far as they can take it.

The Machinist Training Institute gives training in manufacturing trades, using some of the most sophisticated robotic equipment supplied by Detroit corporations. The Center for Advanced Technologies is a program to educate manufacturing engineers in partnership with businesses and universities. Students work toward associate and bachelor degrees. The Information Technologies Center offers computer training, First Step and FAST

TRACK help students improve basic skills in reading, math and communication.

The journalism contest is open to city and suburban students, but the visit to the center is always an eye-opener for suburban teenagers, many of whom come overloaded with preconceptions. At Focus:HOPE, some of those preconceptions might be reinforced. They meet and write about many people who have been heavily knocked around by life in the city. They meet people who are irritable, complaining, defensive and still self-destructive.

But they also meet people who have had an epiphany and know they need to do something to turn their lives around even in a deadly atmosphere where success might seem remote. Focus:HOPE offers them that something; but success comes only with dedication and hard work.

Some students display a real empathy for the people they meet and tell their stories with a keen awareness for the very different world that inner-city Detroit and Focus:HOPE present. Of course, many suburban students also come from difficult family and economic situations and bring that understanding to what they see at the center. But others come from affluence, comfort and security that provides a sharp contrast to the lives of those they meet at the center.

The budding journalists also meet the employees and volunteers who make Focus:HOPE work and learn the story behind the special partnership between Cunningham and Josaitis, which also grew out of frustration over suburban/city relations.

Josaitis was a suburban housewife inspired by the civil rights movement and deeply disturbed by the deadly 1967 riot. Out those strong feelings and empathy for those caught by the cycle of poverty came the program to short-circuit the cycle.

If just a few of these young people can be as equally inspired to act, then the annual contest will have provided an even greater service than the scholarships awarded.

Hugh Gallagher is the managing editor of the *Observer Newspapers*. He can be reached by e-mail at hgallagher@oe.homecomm.net, phone at (734) 953-2149 or by fax at (734) 591-7279.



Hugh Gallagher

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

County Executive Alan Kelmkamp about the ballot language. What difference does the ballot language make if it's routinely ignored?

Before anyone should consider voting to renew the tax, they should demand an accounting for the money the county has already taken.

Tom Stenzel
Livonia

Sometimes press releases don't tell the whole story

Items from the mailbag ...

We receive literally hundreds of pieces of correspondence in the newsroom on any given week. It is no small feat to sift through the myriad letters, press releases, faxes and e-mails. While the majority of the stuff is pretty straightforward, every so often something crosses my desk that genuinely surprises me.

This week was special, in that I discovered two such items. The first was a press release for a Livonia company, the second a press release from a politician announcing he was going to do his job.

Brian Donovan produces dog training videotapes at his Livonia-based company. About a year ago, he started work on a new concept and founded helpmefindmypet.com, a Web-based enterprise the company markets as "the national Amber Alert for pets."

In a nutshell, the program works like this: Pet owners register their pet with the service for \$16 a year. If Fluffy goes missing, an e-mail alert goes out to all other subscribers within a 50-mile radius of your home so they can be on the lookout.

Donovan said his company offers free memberships to veterinarians, groomers, pet supply companies and the like, and also partners with pet agencies by offering a free, one-year subscription to owners when they adopt a pet.

The Web site went live in October, and Donovan said he hopes to build it into a nationwide network, just like the Amber Alert system.

When I first saw the release, I was bothered with the idea of a company trying to profit from the tragic story of Amber Hagerman, the 9-year-old Texas girl whose abduction and murder in 1996 led to the nationwide alert system that law enforcement agencies use to report when a child is missing.

Comparing a missing pet to a missing child also seemed like a cheap marketing ploy that needed some explanation.

So I called Donovan and asked him about his company, and whether he had received any criticism or had any concerns about tying his company to such a tragic event.

Donovan assured me that he was sensitive

to the issue, and he in no way was trying to profit from the tragedy. In fact, he said marketing helpmefindmypet.com as "the national Amber Alert for pets" wasn't even his idea. Rather, it was a local television reporter who interviewed him about his business who first coined the phrase, and it just kind of stuck, he said, adding it was the easiest way to describe what service his company was trying to provide.

But isn't it kind of crass comparing a missing child with a missing pet, I asked? "Maybe not to you or I, but to many pet owners it is almost like the same thing," he said. "It is a very tragic occurrence."

I wonder if Amber Hagerman's family would agree with him.

The second nugget of news arrived via fax Thursday from the offices of Oakland County Prosecutor David Gorcyca. The fax announced the prosecutor had scheduled a press conference for 4:30 p.m. that same day to announce criminal charges against the driver of the vehicle that killed three members of a Farmington Hills family.

I have no doubt that there was considerable interest in the story, as there is whenever such a tragedy occurs. And it is not unusual for Gorcyca's office to issue press releases announcing charges in high-profile cases.

But I was confused why the prosecutor felt the need to go before the television cameras to make the announcement that Thomas Willinger would be charged with second-degree murder. We all knew he was going to be charged with something, given the fact police allege Willinger had a blood-alcohol level four times the level someone is considered drunk.

I happened to catch a clip of the press conference later that night, where a clearly emotional Gorcyca was explaining how affected he was by the tragedy as a father and husband himself. I'm sure he was, as were we all, but I am not sure what that had to do with determining the specific crimes he was charging Willinger with.

Call me a cynic, but it all seemed a bit more politics than prosecutor to me. Unlike most of us, Mr. Gorcyca has to rely on getting re-elected to keep his job, and a little face time never hurts.

Joe Bauman is managing editor for the *Eccentric Newspapers*. He welcomes feedback at (248) 901-2563 or via email at jbauman@oe.homecomm.net.



Joe Bauman

Demand accounting on parks

Your recent article on the Wayne County parks tax wasn't quite complete. Now that about \$90 million in taxes has been collected over the last eight years, Fort Wayne received just \$2 million in capital improvement money in August 2004. This is a fraction of what was promised by the county before the votes to approve, then renew the tax.

The \$2 million arrived just before the last elections.

There was a comment by Assistant Wayne



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Security forces in Iraq must be in Iraqi hands

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

The U.S. needs to do more to turn security responsibilities over to the citizens of Iraq before the image of Americans as occupiers costs any more lives in that embattled country, Sen. Carl Levin told Observer & Eccentric editors Thursday.

The ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, who met with the newspaper's editorial board, said the situation in Iraq is very worrying to him. Progress on security is coming very slowly and the numbers are getting worse with every passing day.

"The number of violent incidents is not going down," Levin said. "We're losing one or two troops a day."

Reports from the administration about the number of Iraqis in security forces are overly rosy at 158,000. He said the number of security officers who are capable, organized and have good leadership are closer to 40,000. A man with a few weeks' training and a sidearm, he said, can't be counted toward the eventual goal of an autonomous Iraqi security force.

Putting an Iraqi face on security operations in the country is a serious concern, Levin said. The U.S. has put itself in the position of being perceived as foreign occupiers, a situation he said should have been avoided at all costs.

"We have given a huge club to the people who want to kill us," Levin said. "We have to change the perception of us as occupiers; it's a deadly perception."

He said bringing peacekeepers or security forces from another Muslim country, even in token numbers, would go a long way toward changing the way people in the streets view the operation there.

Just as troubling, he said, is the political landscape in the country.

Shia Muslims have a majority over Sunni Muslims in the government and they believe that democracy means majority rule. Checks and balances written into the U.S. Constitution prevent minorities from being tyrannized by the majority, but the Iraqis don't have a constitution yet.

"They have to write a constitution by August," Levin said. "I would be surprised if they have a constitutional committee by then."

The United States cannot create a nation in Iraq, he said, we can only open a door and hope they step through on their own. But the longer there is instability in Iraq, the more likely a civil war becomes.

"If the county disintegrates into a civil war the Kurds in the north and in Turkey, Iran and Syria will try to create their own state in the north," Levin said. "That will make those three countries very nervous."

If those three countries become nervous about a Kurdish state in what used to be northern Iraq, they might intervene militarily.

On other Mideast issues, he said the Israeli pullout from the Gaza Strip will help the peace process along. He said Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian Authority President Mahmood Abbas have put their lives, political and literal, on the line to move the peace process along.

"They've taken some huge risks," Levin said.

He said one of the most important points of the Israeli withdrawal from that area is that property, namely large greenhouses, are not vandalized by people either leaving or entering Gaza. He said the destruction of the greenhouses could be very bad for the peace process, which he said is starting to show some promise.

"There are some glimmers of hope," he said.

Senator: Rules changes in Washington would 'rip up' Senate

BY ALEX LUNDBERG
STAFF WRITER

US Senator Carl Levin said the state of politics in Washington D.C. would be severely damaged if Republicans are allowed to change debate rules in the Senate, referring to the so-called "nuclear option" which would end the filibuster as a debate tool.

Levin, a five-term Democrat, met with the Observer & Eccentric's editorial board Thursday to talk about the state of politics in Washington and abroad. He said the controversy over removing the filibuster — unlimited debate in the Senate — as a legislative tactic would upset the system of give and take that Washington has run on for decades.

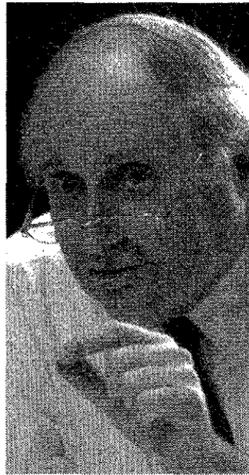
Levin said the filibuster is the only check and balance keeping the White House from getting whatever it wants. Sometimes one party does control the executive and legislative branches and the filibuster rule is all that keeps the majority from steamrolling the minority.

Removing that rule will spell disaster for the Senate.

"It will rip up the Senate," Levin said. "It breaks the rules in order to change them. It would be like an umpire in the middle of a baseball game changing the rules mid-game as to whether a ball was in or out. It's a power grab with negative consequences."

'It will rip up the Senate. It breaks the rules in order to change them. It would be like an umpire in the middle of a baseball game changing the rules mid-game as to whether a ball was in or out. It's a power grab with negative consequences.'

Carl Levin



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

United States Sen. Carl Levin said changing Senate rules to eliminate the filibuster would prove disastrous to the legislative body.

their nominees have been approved. (President) Clinton had 65 judges that never got hearings."

He also commented on President George W. Bush's push to change the nation's Social Security program. He said the president has sold the plan on the premise that there's a looming crisis. He disputes this assessment of the situation.

"It's not a crisis, it's a challenge which is 40 years off," Levin said. "If we do nothing

until the year 2040 we'll only be able to pay two-thirds of the benefits that are owed."

He said the system faced a genuine crisis in 1982 when there was no money in the trust fund. At that time, members of both parties agreed to borrow funds to cover benefits while they changed aspects of the program that kept it solvent for decades to come. The solution passed with broad bipartisan support to save a program most Americans have come to rely upon.

"Social Security has worked and worked brilliantly, to cut poverty amongst seniors," Levin said. "It's a guaranteed commitment, a floor, that government stands by law."

He called the president's plan to privatize the system "a crapshoot" and said Bush has been talking out of both sides of his mouth about the state of the system.

"He says that people who are worried about the stock market can invest in treasury bills," Levin said. "Then in answer to a question about his plan, he said the government takes payroll contributions, spends the money, and all that's left behind is a file cabinet full of IOUs."

The IOUs in question, he said, are treasury notes, which are backed by the full faith and credit of the US government. He said he would like to see the president stand in front of the treasury building and call the notes "IOUs" with investors listening.

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