

Experts offer tips on surviving the holiday blues - Health, C8

Look great in glittery party style



SUNDAY November 27, 2005 Observer (1) Contract of the c

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Hearing set for youths in carjacking case

BY DARRELL CLEM STAFF-WRITER

At least three Detroit teens face a court hearing Thursday for their alleged involvement in a carjacking last Sunday morning in Westland.

A fourth youngster, 16, was turned over to juvenile authorities, but prosecutors will seek to have him tried as an adult, police Sgt. Steve Borisch

The four teens are accused of riding up behind a BMW that was stopped at a traffic light, forcing two men out of the car, robbing them at gunpoint and taking the BMW.

The incident happened about 5 a.m. last Sunday on westbound Warren at Merriman. No shots were fired, and no one was injured.

The following defendants face a preliminary hearing Thursday in Westland 18th District Court. Notguilty pleas have been placed on record for all of them:

Ernest Young, 19, who is accused of driving the stolen BMW. He is charged with carjacking, two counts of armed robbery, felony firearms and fleeing from police during a chase that started after Dearborn Heights police spotted the stolen car.

Young is jailed in lieu of a \$50,000/10 percent bond, meaning he would have to post \$5,000 for his release.

■ Damien Thomas, 17, who is accused of accompanying Young in the stolen BMW. He is charged with carjacking, two counts of armed robbery and felony firearms.

Thomas also is jailed in lieu of a \$50,000/10 percent bond.

Roxanne Silvia, 17, who is accused of being in the 1998 Malibu that pulled up behind the BMW when the carjacking occurred. She also is charged with carjacking, two counts of armed robbery and felony firearms.

Silvia is jailed in lieu of a \$75,000/10 percent bond, and she would have to post \$7,500 for her

Westland District Judge Gail McKnight arraigned the three teens Tuesday as their family members sat in the courtroom.

A fourth teen also was arraigned Tuesday along with Young, Thomas and Silvia, but police later turned him over to a youth home after learning that he was only 16 - not 17 as they had initially believed.

It's possible that the juvenile, allegedly in the Malibu, will still face charges as an adult, Borisch said. He is accused of carjacking, two counts of armed robbery and felony firearms.

During the carjacking, a 27-yearold Westland driver and his 21-yearold brother were forced out of the BMW and ordered to lie down on the pavement, Borisch has said. They were robbed, and the BMW was taken, he said.

According to police, Young was arrested after Dearborn Heights police spotted the BMW and chased it. A Redford police dog was brought in and found him hiding under a Jeep, Borisch has said.

Thomas is accused of fleeing from the BMW and being arrested later at his Detroit home. Police said they arrested Silvia and the 16-year-old suspect after they returned to Westland to look for their friends, only to be spotted in the Malibu.

If convicted as charged, the teens' could face penalties ranging from two years to life in prison. A felony firearms conviction carries a mandatory two-year term; carjacking and armed robbery charges are punishable by any number of years up to life in prison.

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BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tabitha and Theresa Quinn take a noontime break after shopping since 7 a.m. Friday at Westland Shopping Center. The mother-daughter team is from Garden City.

Seeing green

Malls draw shoppers with music, Santa, more

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA STAFF WRITER

The sounds of the season are already flowing through area shopping malls, creating a soundtrack for the buying frenzy. Christmas carols fill shops, restaurants and corridors, and places like Livonia Mall and Westland Shopping Center even offer live entertainment to brighten the experience.

"I think it brings about the festive atmosphere," said Bobbi Gelman, marketing director of Livonia Mall. The mall brings in jazz groups and school groups to entertain shoppers.

"When people come in, we want them to get that warm, fuzzy feeling that makes them want to come back," said Gelman, adding the mall offers easy in-and-out access. "Baby it's cold outside, but it's warm in

Denise Mills, marketing

director of Westland Shopping Center, noted that The Phil Gram All-Stars jazz band have a standing performance on Tuesday, Dec. 6, 20 and Thursday, Dec. 15 at the mall, followed by a strolling barbershop quartet - Three D's & W's - who will make the rounds on Wednesday Dec. 14, 21 and Friday Dec. 16 and 23.

"The two entertainment groups have been coming to the mall for a number of years now," said Mills. "Not only do the merchants ask When are they coming back?' but the shoppers do also.'

That's just one way to draw in shoppers. Another invokes the spirit of giving.

Westland Shopping Center, located at 35000 Warren Road, also functions as a drop-off center for new, unwrapped gifts meant as local Toys for Tots

PLEASE SEE SHOPPERS, A8

Board to discuss Legacy plan

The Livonia Public Schools Board of Education will meet Monday to discuss the demographics committee's Legacy Initiative, a plan that includes the potential to close seven schools and alter the district's boundaries.

The Livonia district serves the north part of Westland.

The board was formally presented with the plan Nov. 14, just under a month after it was released to the community. A public hearing followed Nov. 21 at a packed Carli Auditorium inside Churchill High School. The upcoming meeting will mark the first opportunity for all seven board members to discuss the proposal. Board President Dan

Lessard said it will give trustees an opportunity to ask questions and clarify any information they have. The issue will not go up for a vote during this meeting.
"Hopefully it will gen-

erate more questions, discussion and be very, very beneficial," he said.

Lessard said he plans to keep the discussion among board members open and non-restrictive.

"I'm hoping for dialogue and lots of it," he said. "We are doing something I believe that is just great for kids. Is it going to be easy? No. It means an awful lot of work for an awful lot of people."

The Committee of the Whole, meaning the entire school board, will meet at 7 p.m. at the district office, 15125 Farmington Road, just south of Five Mile.

It is a public, open meeting, and there is time set aside at the start for audience comments. The meeting will also be televised on the district's cable channels, 15 for **Bright House Network** and Wide Open West subscribers and Channel 19 for Comcast viewers.

By Stephanie A. Casola

Goodfellows welcome holiday help

Despite a worrisome economy, people still seemed in a giving mood Friday as Westland Goodfellows volunteers collected money to buy Christmas gifts for children in need.

"They seemed to be generous," said police Lt. James Ridener, who spent much of Friday morning selling Goodfellows newspapers at the Warren-Wayne inter-

Volunteers braved teeth-chattering weather to help raise money.

"The hardest part is staying warm," Goodfellows President Jim Rachwal said.

The number of volunteers grew to at least 30 this year - up from about 20 in recent years, Rachwal said. Goodfellows last year bought toys and clothing for 700 children in 500 families. Rachwal has predicted

job losses and other economic issues.

Anyone who missed Goodfellows volunteers on Friday but who still wants to donate may send checks payable to Westland Goodfellows to the Westland Dorsey Center, c/o Westland Goodfellows, 32715 Dorsey Road, Westland, MI 48186.

that the demand for help will increase this year, due to



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

in Filter

Westland firefighter Tom Wright braves cold weather and mall traffic while collecting donations for the Westland Goodfellows at the corner of Wayne and Warren roads."

Information about Goodfellows also is available online at www.westlandgoodfellows.org.

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HEALTH JOBS OBITUARIES PERSPECTIVES NEW HOMES SERVICE GUIDE

Coming Thursday INDEX **APARTMENTS** 05 **E7** AUTOMOTIVE COMMUNITY LIFE **D7** Crossword **C8**

C4 A9

C10

E1

E2

The Rockettes good cheer at the Radio City



Roaring mission

Guard helicopter, crew lift off Laurel Park fund-raiser

STAFF WRITER

A few minutes before the CH-47 Chinook helicopter roared to its windswept lift-off on a recent Saturday morning, the craft's captain. CW3 Mark A Tyler, stood on the parking lot of Laurel Park Place mall describing the din raised by the massive craft.

"I like to say, 'It's the sound of freedom," Tyler said. "That's what it's here for."

Tyler and his four-man crew of U.S. Army National Guardsmen brought the very large, very loud cargo helicopter with two blades and three engines onto the mall lot for about an hour visit recently. The event was an attentiongrabber for the arrival of Santa Claus at the mall – and for the mall's holiday push to raise money for service members from Selfridge Air National

Goard base and their families.

The mall is asking those who

bring their kids to see Santa to

bring a gas card, phone card or



CW3 Mark A. Tyler of the U.S. Army National Guard talks about the C-47 Chinook helicopter behind him to a group of onlookers, including a North Pole resident, in front of Laurel Park Place mall.

money to donate.

"We're the middle person in terms of need," explained Laurel Park Place marketing director Patrick Derrig of the effort. The mall hopes to raise \$20,000 to help out those who are making the sacrifice and their families, who must deal with the emotional separation and monetary strain. "Just to have a phone card to contact a loved one is just magic for someone in need," Derrig said.

"And you know there are those needs," agreed Livonia Mayor Jack Engebretson, himself a U.S. Air Force veteran. He was at the event to lend his support - and provide a key to the city for Santa.

The helicopter and its crew were the main attractions for more than 100 visitors that morning. Visitors asked about its towing capacity (50,000 pounds), its speed (cruising at 175 miles per hour) and its battle missions (moving troops and ammunition in Iraq).

The crew had also moved some big names, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney while in Iraq, and former President George Bush to view the ravages of Hurricane Katrina. Along with dropping 6,000-pound sandbags to help shore up the levies in New Orleans, they also dropped bales of hay for stranded cattle.

As Tyler was answering questions, an awestruck little boy in a wheelchair looked up. "Are you a pilot?" the boy asked.

Tyler crouched down to answer him. "I flew that in here today," he said, pointing at the helicopter.

"How?" the boy asked with amazement.

"Years of training," he answered.

Other crew members - CW2 Eric Tupa, Staff Sgt. Timothy Glynn and Sgt. Brandon Hodges - also took time to han-

dle questions and pose for pictures. And all seemed to enjoy the visit.

Tyler certainly did. When asked about his effort in helping to set up the visit organized by Derrig, Tyler said, "My personal motivation is to allow the public to see where their tax dollars are going."

More than that, he said, "What a great cause. They're here to raise money to support our troops and families ...

Later, as the crew prepared the craft for its departure - and many visitors watched from a safe distance away - visitor Ernie Natalini commended the crew: "They're great ambassadors.

And then in a swirl of wind the craft lifted off and, with side, it sped quickly over the mall and circled back over with more waves from the crew returned by many in the

crew members waving out the

House bills provide tuition funding for vets and families

Legislation has been introduced to provide tuition funding for veterans, their families and the families of first responders killed in the line of duty.

"The men and women who serve in uniform and on the front lines of public safety make tremendous sacrifices every day," said State Rep. Jim Plakas, D-Garden City. "This legislation is a small measure of what we can give back to them. What we owe them, we can never fully repay. By helping them and their families with college tuition, it is our small way of saying thanks."

The four-bill legislation introduced by House Democrats would:

■ Provide a full tuition waiver for children of first-respon-

ders killed in the line of duty. ■ Provide up to \$2,500 in tuition waivers for veterans of the wars in Iraq and

Afghanistan.

■ Stabilize tuition funding for children of disabled veterans or those killed in the line of duty.

■ Increase tuition funding for children of disabled veterans or those killed in the line of duty so that it is fully funded at any Michigan public university. A Korean War veteran who

served in the U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps Plakas said he has had close relationships with emergency responders as a former member of the Garden City Hospital board of trustees. "I have had the honor and

privilege to work alongside brave men and women who as only that they be allowed to serve their country and their community," said Plakas.

The death or disability of a veteran or first-responder can inflict heavy financial hardships, Plakas noted.

AROUND WESTLAND

Blood drive

VFW Bova Post 9885 will have a blood drive for the American Red Cross 2-8 p.m. Monday, Nov. 28, at the VFW hall at 6440 N. Hix, between Ford and Warren. Walk-ins are welcome or, to schedule an appointment, call (734) 728-3231. Names of donors will be placed in a drawing for a gift certificate at Vision Lanes for an hour of free bowling, free shoe rental, a large pizza and a pitcher of pop for up to five people.

Retiree reunion

A Christmas party for former employees and retirees of Wayne County General Hospital will be held 5-9 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6, at the Golden Corral buffet restaurant on Warren Road east of Newburgh. A private room has been reserved. For more information call Patricia Ibbotson at (313) 561-0177.

Democrats meet

The Westland Democratic Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 29, at the Dorsey Center, located east of Venoy and south of Palmer. Officers will meet at 7 p.m.

Christmas concert

The Westland Community Foundation will sponsor a holiday reception featuring the Glenn Singers from John Glenn High School 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 7, in the school's media center. The school is on Marquette west of Wayne Road.

Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Those attending are asked to bring an unwrapped toy that will be given to The Salvation Army for children in need at Christmastime.

Please call (734) 595-7727 for a reservation.

Thanksgiving dance The Wayne Ford Civic

League will host a Thanksgiving Senior Dinner & Dance at noon today, Nov. 27, at 1645 N. Wayne Rd in Westland. There will be turkey, ham and trimmings with dancing to the music of the Meltones. Tickets are \$8 for members and \$10 for nonmembers of the league. They are available at the door. For more information call (734) 728-5010. Those attending should be 60 years old or older.

Membership meeting

The Westland Youth Athletic Association will hold its annual general membership meeting at 7 p.m. Dec. 1. The meeting will be held at the WYAA Lange Compound at 6050 Farmington Road, Westland.

For more information, con-

tact the WYAA at (734) 421-0640 or electronically at wyaa@wyaa.org.

Holiday party

Westland senior citizens are invited to the Holiday Extravaganza, a Christmas party, at the Westland senior Friendship Center, Thursday, Dec. 15.

Doors will open at 11:30 a.m., with the "fabulous feast" will be served at noon. There will be a chance to have pictures take with Santa and Mrs. Claus, dancing to the music of the Tommie James Trio and gifts galore.

Tickets cost \$8 for members and \$10 for guests. They're available at the Friendship center, 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland.

New Year's Eve

Tickets are now on sale for the Ushers Club's annual New Year's Eve dinner dance at Ss. Simon and Jude Church, 32500 Palmer, Westland. Tickets cost \$20 each and include reserved seating, party favors, snacks, mixers, beer, a three-meat buffet with side items, dancing to the music of The Goldtones and pizza shortly after midnight.

Tickets are limited and none will be sold after Dec. 27. To order them, call Sharlene or Curt Frizzell at (734) 425-6819.

Las Vegas Party

St. Bernardine Men's Club is sponsoring a Pinochle/Euchre Card Party on Fridays, Dec. 2 and 16, Jan. 6, 13 and 27 and Feb. 3, 17 and 24, at the church, southwest corner Ann Arbor Trail and Merriman in Westland.

Participants don't need a partner to play. Snacks and soft drinks are included in the \$5 charge. Games start at 7:30

Craft show

The annual Hawthorne Valley holiday craft show and Pack 547 bake sale will be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. today, Nov. 27, at the facility at 7300 Merriman, Westland. Admission will be \$2, with kids free of charge.

Car donation

People with a car to donate can give it to Veterans Haven. The organization is accepting cars, running or not running, that are given to veterans to provide them with transportation to work, school of medical needs.

To date, the agency has given away more than 250 vehicles and three fully furnished mobile homes to needy veterans. To donate, call Veterans Haven at (734) 728-0527 or go to vetshaveninfo.org on the Internet.

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POSTAL PERIODICAL REQUIREMENTS The Westland Observer - Publication NO. USPS 663-530 Published every Thursday and Sunday, Periodical postage is paid at Livonia, Michigan 48150.

36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150





CITY OF GARDEN CITY December 12, 2005 -**BOARD OF REVIEW**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO all property owners of the City of Garden City that the Board of Review will meet in session on Tuesday, December 13, 2005 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to correct mutual mistakes of fact or clerical errors. PA74 of 1995 authorizes the July Board of Review to hear appeals for poverty exemptions, but not for poverty exemptions denied by the March Board of Review. This applies to current year only.

ALLYSON BETTIS TREASURER-CITY CLERK

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CITY OF GARDEN CITY

To all residents and interested parties, The Council minutes will be available for review on the internet at

www.gardencitymi.org

You can access this information at the Garden City Library or City Hall during regular Business hours or in the Police Station Lobby ALLYSON M. BETTIS, Treasurer/City Clerk

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Tech-gift expert shares advice on holiday deals

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA STAFF WRITER

When it comes to buying new technology, shoppers seek out expert advice.

Last week in South Redford, that advice came free from Gary LaPointe, the district's director of technology services.

LaPointe hosted three community seminars to share holiday deals and news about new products on holiday shopping

"We've done this several times before and people seem to like it," LaPointe said. "Who doesn't like new technology and saving money at the same

This year's must-have tech gifts according to LaPointe were as follows:

■ TiVo – Topping the list this year is the popular digital television recorder. "It will change the way you watch television," said LaPointe. It can be programmed to find and record television shows, music artists

■ iPod – A close second on LaPointe's list was Apple's MP3 music player. He suggested the 4 GB Nano is a good deal at \$249, because it costs just \$50 more than the 2 GB version. And the full size iPod now holds more than just music.

The 30 GB version costs \$299, and the 60 GB is \$399. The newest generation of iPod offers video in addition to playing audiobooks, podcasts and

Scene It - "The best game out there," according to LaPointe, it incorporates video clips and trivia in an array of subject areas, but costs about

Also making the list of favorites is a small digital camera. LaPointe suggested a camera with 4 to 6 megapixels and a real zoom. He suggested buying a bigger memory chip to go with it.

For anyone on the go, Palm Pilot handheld devices hold important information. And when looking for a laptop, LaPointe said smaller laptops are often the best. He suggested a Sony Vaio or Apple iBook or Powerbook. It should come with a DVD player and CD burner, he said.

Stocking stuffers can also be tech-themed. LaPointe presented small USB drives for holding information, retractable cables for travel, and tiny WiFi detectors to seek out a signal for your laptop.

Look for deals at sites like www.woot.com, slickdeals.net, dealnews.com and grupare.com/deals.



Edison Elementary second-grader Vinouue Martin said the turkey was 'really really good' at the school's Thanksgiving feast. Students in Jennifer Preblich's and Erin Held's classes enjoyed turkey, stuffing and all the trimmings for their feast.

Kids enjoy turkey feast, fun

Students in two Edison Elementary School classes enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast Tuesday, which seemed fitting as they study about this country's early settlers.

The students dined on turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and corn, part of an annual Thanksgiving event arranged by teachers Jennifer Preblich and Erin Held.

"The students love it," Principal Barbara Hastings said. "They really enjoy it, and lots of parents help out that day."

Preblich teaches a split first- and second-grade class. Held teaches a split second- and third-grade

Students and parents who participate get more than just a belly full of good food, Hastings said.

"This really increased the feeling of community in the school," she said.



Edison Elementary students in grades one through three enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner thanks to a program sponsored by their teachers, Jennifer Preblich and Erin Held.



Second-grader Breeanna Oravecz, with the help of visiting parent Karyn Bizek, fills her plate during Edison Elementary School's Thanksgiving feast. Bizek's daughter, Jennafer, also is in the class.



TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gary LaPointe offered free seminars on shopping for new technology.



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Basketball lover looks to build new planet

BY CAROL MARSHALL STAFF WRITER

Sounds echoed from the cold walls in the empty 47,600-square-foot building. The heat wasn't yet working and the lights were off until crews of workers arrived late in the morning to continue with renovations. But instead of the dust and the bare concrete drywall what Mike Cenit saw was a whole new world.

A planet, in fact.
What Cenit, of West
Bloomfield, saw was hundreds
of basketball enthusiasts,
gathering for training and
pickup games and socialization in what he describes as an
uncommonly luxurious private
basketball club. If all goes
according to plan, the vision
will come to life by the end of
January when the new club,
Basketball Planet, opens its
doors in Canton.

Though basketball has

always been a passion for Cenit, it hadn't occurred to him to make it his business until he met Jamey Petree, a basketball trainer who had been working with Cenit's daughter, Carly, starting just before her freshman year at Andover High School.

Observer & Eccentric | Sunday, November 27, 2005

"She's athletic, but not a naturally gifted athlete, but the things that Jamey did for her game were just incredible," Cenit said. "She's got such confidence, and is a self-assured player and person. I was impressed."

Petree and Cenit would talk from time to time when Cenit brought his daughter to Lifetime Fitness in Novi, where Petree was training other young ball players.

After a few months of talking, the pair hatched an idea to build a private club, dedicated to the sport they both love. They brought in a colleague of Petree's, Will Vance, and one day almost two years ago, the three went to a restaurant to discuss their dream. Shortly after that, they put together a business plan and started looking for a location in earnest about 14

months ago.

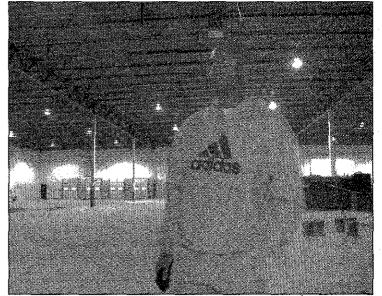
They looked at a location in Southfield, then at another in Canton, one which they nearly bought. But finally opted to take out a long-term lease on the former Circuit City repair building on Haggerty Road in Canton.

The business plan has always hinged on a few simple ideals, Cenit said. One is that the trio, who has also gathered about nine other partners and financial backers, never wanted to build the club from the ground up - at least not the building.

"In order to provide the kind of opulence we have in mind, we never wanted to make the investment in brick and mortar. We needed an existing structure," Cenit said.

Another key to success, they believe, is private membership to the club. Though hosting tournaments can be exciting and prestigious, it's the month-to-month customer that will be Basketball Planet's bread and butter. And it will take 3,000 members before the club becomes profitable. The club is also relying on corporate sponsorship for its profits, and has been deliberating with several major companies interested in advertising at the club.

Another key element is noholds-barred luxury. From the custom slate floors in the entry lobby, to the touch-screen member sign in, to the Internet store, the upscale coffee shop, comfortable stadium seating instead of bleachers, and a glassed-in lounge outfitted with state-of-the-art video equipment, Cenit said much of



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Will Vance stands in an area that will have four full-size basketball courts, two training courts and a toddler's court.

the \$500,000 investment into the club has been in little comfort-driven details.

The club will have four full courts, two practice courts, a toddler court, and memberships will run \$40 per month

ships will run \$40 per month. "I can tell you we've never seen anything like this," Petree said of the club.

For more information, visit online at www.thebasket-ballplanet.com.

cmarshall@hometownlife.com

LegalEase: A new name, breed in outsourcing

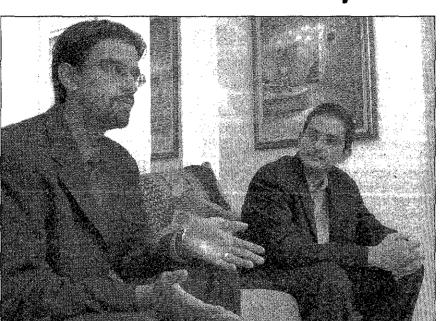
BY CAROL MARSHALL STAFF WRITER

Out-source. In southeast Michigan, the phrase itself has become, in some households, as offensive as swearing at the dinner table. But Canton residents Tariq Akbar and Tariq Hafeez are working to change the image of the word, as they themselves open up doors to the next big thing in outsourcing: The legal profession.

Akbar and Hafeez, partners in the firm they've named LegalEase Solutions, have been for the last year providing off-shore legal support services to attorneys in 11 different states.

"Outsourcing has been in the United States for more than 20 years, and recently it's become like a bad word," Akbat said. "But there's a new breed of out-sourcing and it's tapping the intellectual capital of the world."

He added that most people associate outsourcing with job loss - an American factory worker loses his job because his employer opens up shop overseas and replaces him with a low-wage worker. But Akbar said in this case, out-sourcing is really about job creation in a global economy. The duo has employed five attorneys in the United States, as well as eight attorneys in India.



BILL BRESLER | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHE

Tariq Akbar (right) and Tariq Hafeez, both of Canton, are partners in the firm, LegalEase Solutions, which provides off-shore legal support services to attorneys in 11 states.

The services provided by LegalEase attorneys are typical of those that a new lawyer, right out of law school, would provide, according to Akbar. They perform support functions such as legal research and writing, preparation of

pleadings, patent services, and document review, and they do it at a reduced cost because attorney fees in India are much lower than in the United States.

nited States. "That's what legal out-sourcing is all about," Akbar said. "We are viable because we can get some of the grunt work done very affordably."

It was Hafeez, an attorney who had been employed for the State Attorney General's office, who first came up with the idea to outsource legal work. However, because he was born and raised in Michigan, he had no contacts in India. But Akbar, who is related to him by marriage, did.

Akbar, who was at the time employed as a business consultant by Deloitte and Touche, moved to the U.S. just six years ago, and his family has strong connections in the legal profession back in India.

"I thought of him right away and we began talking about it," Hafeez said.

It was a leap of faith leaving their full-time jobs to devote all their time to the new company. Akbar, whose first child was due to be born any day now, and Hafeez, a father of two small children, said because they are the breadwinners in their families, it was definitely unnerving to leave their former jobs. They found a few investors who believe in the idea.

"But I believe this will sustain us, and it will happen very soon," Hafeez said. The business was one of only five in the world just a year ago, according to Akbar, but now is one of 14. "We grew 100 percent last month," he said.

Even though both partners began full-time work for LegalEase just this June, they believe that by December the company will begin turning a profit.

No matter how much Akbar and Hafeez believe in the fledgling company, they still had to look at how they would be perceived, due to the negative connotations of outsourcing. But their concerns were calmed a bit when they hired a salesman to increase their client base, and he put it this way: "Are you serious? We're talking about lawyers here. I don't think anyone is really upset about lawyers losing their jobs."

The bottom line is, according to Akbar, some one million attorneys in the U.S. last year earned about \$7 billion.

"That's just a lot of money," he said.
"People have to think really hard before
they see a lawyer because it's so expensive. And I know that one of our clients
right here in Michigan does pass along
his savings to his clients. I do think that
companies like ours will provide a benefit to the common man."

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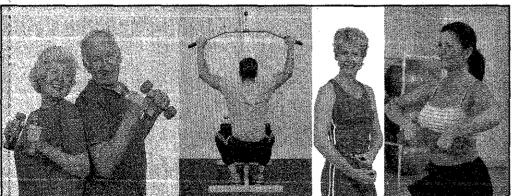
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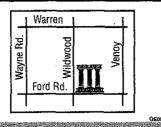
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Relationship benefits community

BY LEANNE ROGERS
STAFF WRITER

Sometimes good things result from bad situations — that seems to be the case with the relationship between the Garden City Fire Department and Gordon Chevrolet.

After one of the dealership's salesmen had a heart attack while at work, General Manager Susan Ianni arranged for her employees to have CPR classes taught by firefighters.

The dealership also purchased an automatic external defibrillator that can be used when someone has a heart attack.

Most recently, the dealership donated a \$10,748 three-year lease on a 2006 Chevrolet Trailblazer to the Fire Department. The vehicle will be used as a mobile command unit and for public education.

"Sue and I were talking one day about bad weather. I mentioned that sometimes it was hard to get to emergencies with a two-wheel drive vehicle in the snow," Fire Chief Bill Forbush said. "I'm a hands-on kind of chief and respond to a lot of these incidents."

That prompted the dealership to donate the lease on the vehicle — an expense the city couldn't cover at this time.

"It goes back to my guy having the heart attack. The Fire Department saved him," Ianni said.

The vehicle will have a specially constructed wooden console for the rear built by Nate Sturos, an engineer with the department. It will hold plans for schools and other buildings that might be needed during an emergency.

The two CPR classes at the dealership have turned into regular classes filled with volun-

teers who signed up through radio stations on which Gordon Chevrolet advertises.

"We underwrite the costs and do the classes at the dealership. We haven't figured out if we'll do it monthly or every other month,"

Feeling helpless when she didn't know what to do when her salesman had the heart attack, Ianni took CPR training herself and is a big

booster of the classes.

One evening as she headed home from work, Ianni noticed people on the side of the road — a young man had a drug overdose and

road — a young man had a drug overdose and wasn't breathing.

"You can either watch him die or do something — those are your two choices," said
Ianni, who performed rescue breathing on the

man, who survived. "I did hesitate, not having a breathing barrier, but you don't have a choice. You've got to help people."

With the dealership covering the costs for CPR class materials and FireSafe Home grant program audio-visual equipment used, Forbush said the classes can be offered at no charge. Forbush, his wife Tammy and Deputy

Fire Marshal Michael Massey handle the class-

"I was impressed with the people who came through (radio station) WMUZ. All 25 showed up, they were interested, attentive and wanted to be there," Forbush said. "You don't always have that when it's a free class. It's unusual for that many to come."

It's recommended that after initial CPR training, a refresher course be taken every two years. Anyone interested in signing up for CPR training can call Ianni at (734) 427-6200.

Irogers@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2103



(W)

Woman irate after home hit with hunter's bullet

BY CAROL MARSHALL STAFF WRITER

When Patricia Pellerito woke to the sound of gunfire, she knew enough was enough. That's when I called the

police," she said. The gunfire, she said, is coming from hunters' rifles, and the hunters are firing where they have no business

doing so. "I've got nothing against hunting," Pellerito said. "But you can't hunt in my backyard."

Pellerito said for years hunters have continued to fire off guns in the open field not far from her home in the River Meadows subdivision, off Geddes Road, west of Canton Center. But this year, the hunting activity has become worse, she said, and the hunters are more persistent, despite continued residential development of the

Just like clockwork, on Nov. 15, the opening day of firearms hunting season, Pellerito heard the hunters. In the nine years she's owned her home, she'd heard them before, but it's only recently she began to hear them as close to her house as they are now. Close enough, she said, that at some point one of them shot a bullet into the siding on her house.

"They're just too close," Pellerito said. Hunting is not prohibited in

Canton Township, according to Canton Police Deputy Chief Laura Golles, but hunting with a rifle close to homes is illegal.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources specifies where hunting is legal, she said, and certain areas of

FOR THE RECORD



For the Record appears in every edition of the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers.

Complete paid obituaries can be found inside today's newspaper in Passages on page C4.

Elizabeth White Baker

Baker, 86, of Troy, died Nov. 22. Angus John Broadbent Broadbent, 86, of Mulberry, Fla., died

Nov. 22.

Mary Lou Munguia Munguia, 76, died Nov. 19.

Steve E. Potoczak

Potoczak, 65, of Freeman Township, died Nov. 8.

Carole Pray (nee Wall) Pray, of Saugatuck, died Nov 25.

Ruth Louise Hemp Smith Smith, 89, of Rochester Hills, died Nov.

Brent C. Verrot Verrot, 46, died Nov. 19.

Leonard "Leo" Wagner Wagner, of Clarkston, died Nov. 21.

Read Taste



Canton are still huntable, according to the DNR.

However, the township can make laws to control hunting activity, and it has.

"The DNR says where you can hunt, but we say how you can hunt," Golles said.

For starters, hunters who go on permitted property must have verbal permission from the property owner to hunt there. It's quite possible that the hunters near Pellerito's home did have permission. But if they were hunting with a rifle, they've violated township ordinances and state law, which prohibits using a rifle to hunt in southeast Michigan. The township allows hunting in DNRapproved areas, but only with bow and arrow, or a shotgun

And if the hunters were too close to homes, they've broken township laws.

with shot no larger than a No.

"You cannot hunt within 150 yards of an occupied building, dwelling, house, residence, cabin, bar or any other. kind of structure. That's what

pretty much blocks Canton from hunting because there's a house everywhere you go," Golles said.

Last year Canton officials, including Public Safety Director John Santomauro, were hoping to enact an ordinance that would ban all hunting in the township. However, only the Michigan Department of Natural Resources can ban hunting in areas where it is currently allowed.

Currently, hunting is allowed only west of Canton

Center, from Warren south to Michigan Avenue. There are a few exceptions, which is why the township has a map available that shows designated hunting areas, which are classified as open or restricted.

The map is available at the

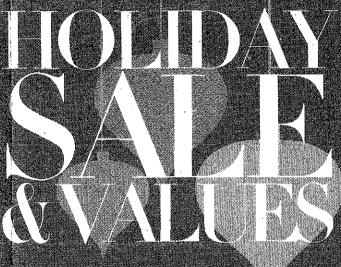
township clerk's office. Péllerito called police on Nov. 17 and again a day later. The second time she called, officers were able to talk to one of the hunters who said he owns the property where he's hunting, and he has 20 acres, which by law is enough to hunt on, according to Sgt. Rick Pomorski.

But Pellerito said she feels like she's in a war zone some days in autumn.

We have a bunch of yahoos who don't know the difference between a subdivision and the country," she said. "They're taking pot shots at whitetails in our neighborhood because they're too lazy to go up north and hunt for real.

cmarshall@hometownlife.com (734) 459-2700

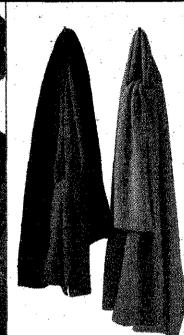
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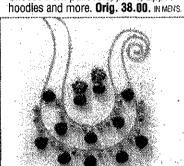
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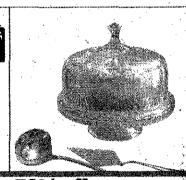
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Helping hands: Rotarians visit Africa to fight polio

BY JULIE BROWN STAFF WRITER

Observer & Eccentric | Sunday, November 27, 2005

Sam Kennedy of Plymouth ran out of eggs for breakfast and went to Kroger. He cried when he saw the full shelves of the supermarket, "which is not my usual reaction to Kroger."

Kennedy, a member of Plymouth A.M. Rotary, traveled to Niger in Africa Nov. 5-19 for a National Immunization Day program. Fellow club member Jeanne Knopf DeRoche of Plymouth Township traveled to Ghana this past month, also to immunize young children against polio. She was in Ghana Nov. 9-21, including some time touring schools and orphanages, and meeting

"This was the first time I was able to do it," DeRoche said Tuesday afternoon soon after her plane landed.

people in the village of Jirapa.

"Poorest country on earth, hottest country on earth," Kennedy said of Niger, where the temperature reached 105-130 degrees during the day. The average family income is \$200 a year.

From Nov. 12-15, 65 million children were vaccinated in Africa, 3.2 million in Niger alone. "It was done by 10,000

volunteers," Kennedy said. The Rotary PolioPlus program, which dates back to the 1980s, works with such partners as the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control to eradicate polio. North America, Europe and much of the rest of the world are polio-free, but the disease persists in certain countries.



Residents of the village of Maradi, Niger, receive balloons from the volunteers who traveled to Africa to administer polio vaccine.

Both Kennedy and DeRoche enioved meeting the **Rotarians from Africa. She** too found the people of Ghana gracious and grateful, and praises their ingenuity.

Kennedy traveled with 18 Rotarians, administering an oral vaccine for children age 5 and under. One mother offered him her porridge, even though she didn't have enough to eat.

"She's wanting to give me food," he said. "What struck me was the incredible kindness of these people." He spoke poor French and a little of the local language. Kennedy had visited Cuba

to do humanitarian work a few years ago. "It made Cuba look like New York or Chicago," he said of Niger.

He'd never experienced anything like this before, and wants to get the word out on the effort and Rotary's role.

"This is one of the best things I've ever done in my life," he said.

DeRoche didn't have language problems, as Ghana is an English-speaking country. After the time administering polio vaccine, she and several others from Rotary's District 6400 went to Jirapa. They provided treated mosquito nets to combat malaria, along with school supplies, and were given two goats and four chickens as gifts in return.

The goats went to a local priest - one goat's named Plymouth and the other Windsor, part of District 6400. The chickens went to



Plymouth resident Sam Kennedy visits with children in Niamey, Niger, during his time administering polio vaccine as a Rotary volunteer.

their host.

information.

"I got to really live with the people," she said of her travels. DeRoche will talk to local Rotarians about her experiences, and hopes to see more international projects such as adopting an orphanage run by a nun there.

"I think I will never take water for granted again," she said. Rotary put wells in some parts of Africa where villagers had to walk great distances before for water and weren't guaranteed a safe supply.

Both Kennedy and DeRoche enjoyed meeting the | jbrown@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2111

Rotarians from Africa. She too found the people of Ghana gracious and grateful, and praises their ingenuity.

"They can take nothing and make it work for them," she

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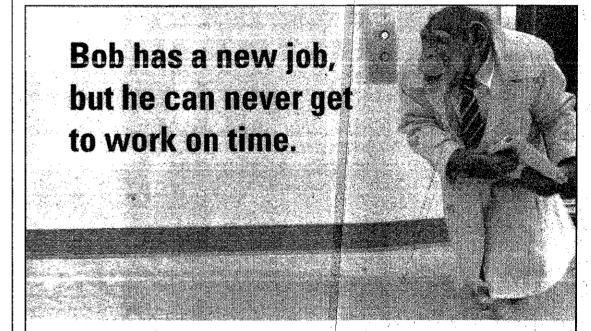
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UPCOMING EVENTS

Holiday bazaar

Get your holiday gifts at the Wayne County Commission's eighth annual Holiday Bazaar at the Wayne County Building in downtown Detroit on Friday, Dec. 9. Jewelry, unique crafts and clothing will be on display 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the atrium of the building at 600 Randolph. Proceeds from vendor booth rentals to benefit local non-

profits. Craft show

Reserve a table now for the Wayne Senior Activity Center pre-holiday arts and crafts show 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 3, at the senior center, 35000 Sims, Wayne. Cost is \$25 per table, electricity provided. For more information, call Lucy at (734) 721-

7460.

Starfish programs Starfish Family Services Great Parents, Great Start teachers help prepare children, ages 2 -4 years for preschool and school in their own home. Fun, learning activities help children grow and learn and parents learn tips, too. The program is open to families in western Wayne County, if they qualify. Call (734) 595-0411, Ext. 104, for more information. Starfish also has a ongoing, free Pregnancy Support Group, offering pregnant women a chance to talk with other pregnant women, meet with a prenatal nurse, hear baby's heart beat and learn about nutrition, pain management and other topics. Groups to be held in Wayne, Westland and Inkster areas. To register, (734) 595-0411, Ext.

HISTORIC

Pioneer trek The Nankin Township Pioneer Trek has been designed to introduce travelers to the history of the area. Travelers will visit sites that affected the development of Westland as a community. Those who complete the trek will receive an embroidered patch. To start the trek, first visit the Westland Historical Museum and pick up a packet. The museum is at 857 N. Wayne Road and is open 1-4 p.m. Saturdays, except before a holiday. The trek is sponsored by the Westland Historical Commission and the Friends of the Westland Museum, For information, call (734) 326 1110. Friends of Eloise

The Friends of Eloise group meets 7

p.m. the third Tuesday of the month in the dining room of the Kay Beard Building, on Michigan between Middlebelt and Merriman. All are well come. For information, call Jo Johnson, (734) 522-3918. Friends of Museum

Friends of the Westland Historical Museum meet at 7 p.m. each month except December at the Collins House, located at the museum complex, 857 N. Wayne Road. Call Jim Franklin at (734) 595-8119. Everyone is welcome. welcome.

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Clio

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Veterans of Foreign Wars 3323 Auxiliary has bingo 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at 1055 S. Wayne Road.

Westland, There is a snack bar. The post has bingo at 1 p.m. every Sunday at the same place. Call (734) 326-3323.

Dems hold bingo

The Metro Wayne Democratic Club has bingo 10:45 a.m. every Monday at the Wayne Ford Civic League, on Wayne Road south of Ford in Westland, For Information, call Jan or Cliff at (734) 591-1694 or Cliff at (734) 729-8681.

St. Mel Church Bingo begins at 6:45 p.m. Fridays in St. Mel Church activities building, on Inkster Road north of Warren. Doors

open at 4 p.m. Food is available. Shamrock Bingo

Bingo begins at 11 a.m. Wednesdays at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 35100 Van Born, east of Wayne Road in Wayne. Doors open at 9 a.m. Food is available. Proceeds go to charity. Call (734) 728-3020.

K of C Bingo

Pope John XXIII Assembly of the Knights of Columbus Council 1536 hosts bingo games at 6:45 p.m. Thursdays. The games are in the Livonia Elks Lodge, 31117 Plymouth Road, one block east of Merriman in Livonia, Call (734) 425-2246.

Metro Wayne

The Metro Wayne Democratic Club offers a bingo at the Wayne-Ford Civic League on Fridays, Doors open at 9 a.m., with bingo starting at 10:45 a.m. An all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet is available for \$3. For more information, call Cliff Johnson at (734) 729-8681.

FOR SENIORS

Friendship Center

The Senior Resources Department (Friendship Center), 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland, offers a variety of programs for older adults. The Web site www.ci.westland.mi.us offers more information, Call (734) 722-7632.

Crochet & Knit

A crochet and knit group meets 9:30 a.m. every Thursday at the Friendship Center on Newburgh near Marquette. Beverly Kaminski is the instructor. Participants should bring a type "G" crochet hook. Those interested can sign up at the center's front desk or call (734) 722-7632.

Visually Impaired

The Visually Impaired Persons (VIPs) support group meets 12:30 p.m. every Friday at the Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh, Westland. Participants share information and meet others. Those interested in joining can be scheduled on a bus route for transportation. For information, call (734) 722-7632.

Choir

The Senior Choir, under the leadership of Robert Cassidy, is open to those who like to sing. It meets 9:30 a.m. Thursday, for information, call the Friendship Center, (734) 722-7632.

Hearing checks

Every third Tuesday of each month, a representative from Personalized Hearing Care of Westland will check and clean hearing aids free, 2-3 p.m. by appointment only, Call (734) 722-7632 for more information.

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Friday, at \$3 per person per class. Sign up at the front desk at the Westland Friendship Center or call (734) 722-7632.

Travel Group

The Friendship Travel Group meets 1 p.m. the second Friday of each month (unless a large event is scheduled) in the Westland Friendship Center, 1119 N. Newburgh. Programs include celebration of birthdays, door prizes, description of new classes or programs, speakers from tour companies, overview of day/ overnight trips and refreshments. Call (734) 722-7632.

Dyer Center

The Wayne-Westland school district's Dyer Senior Adult Center offers activities Monday-Thursday at the center, on Marquette between Wayne and

Newburgh roads, Mondays, Senior Chorus at 1:30 p.m.; Tuesdays, arts, crafts and needlework at 9:30 a.m.; Wednesdays, kitchen band, 10 a.m., bingo at 1 p.m.; Thursdays, ceramics, arts, crafts at 9:30 a.m.

ORGANIZATIONS

Vietnam Vets

The Plymouth-Canton Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 528, meet at 7:30 p.m. the second Monday of every month at the Plymouth VFW Post 6695, on S. Mill Street, just north of Ann Arbor Road. If you served in the U.S. military between 1964 and 1975, even, if not, "in country" (combat zone) you are still eligible to become a member. Visit the

Web site at www.mihometown.com/oe/Plymouth CantonVVA for more information. Friends of library

The Friends of the William P. Faust Public Library organization meets at 2 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at the library, 6123 Central City Parkway. Call (734) 326-6123. Meetings last about one hour and are open to the public. The group also holds a book sale during regular library hours

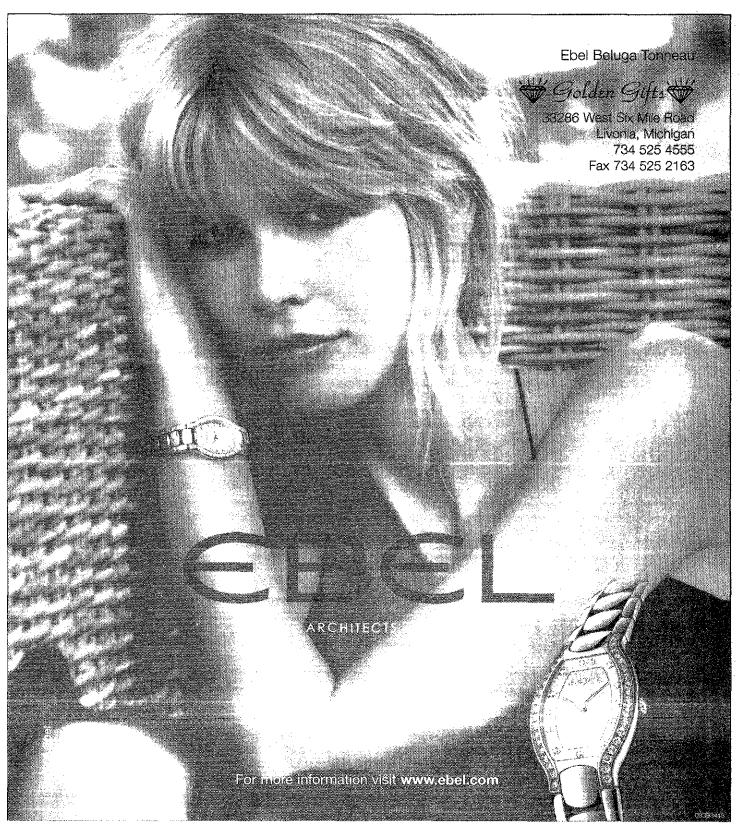
at the library.

in Harmony The Wayne Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society meets at 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays at Kirk of Our Savior Presbyterian Church, 36660 Cherry Hill, west of Wayne Road, Westland. Gentlemen interested in the chapter's

Renaissance Chorus or who enjoy quarteting can call membership chairman Bob Wolf at (734) 421-1652, or. attend a rehearsal.

Civil Air Patrol

Emergency service is just one of the congressionally mandated missions of the Civil Air Patrol, which includes ground and air search-and-rescue operations. The Civil Air Patrol, which is the official U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is made up of civilian volunteers. To learn more about CAP or training as an air crew or ground team member, contact the Willow Run Composite Squadron (MI-260). Call Capt. Dane Hansen, deputy commander/recruiter, at (734) 485-3021 or visit the Web site www.members.home.net/capliberators/.





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Yosilanti



Dressed for the shopping battle is Jessica Hutson of KB Toys. Hutson, a Redford resident, hands out advertising circulars to shoppers at Westland Shopping Center.

SHOPPERS

FROM PAGE A1

donations. In addition, mall visitors can stop by the Salvation Army's Giving Tree to find out what children in need might like for a holiday gift. Then, those gifts can be left at the security department for delivery.

The Community Hospice of Westland has placed a Tree of Memories at the shopping center, in remembrance of those who died this year. Purchase a gold angel at the mall or by calling (734) 522-

And then of course, there is the requisite visit with Santa

The jolly old elf set up residence at Westland Shopping Center on Nov. 12 and will stay until Christmas eve, of course.

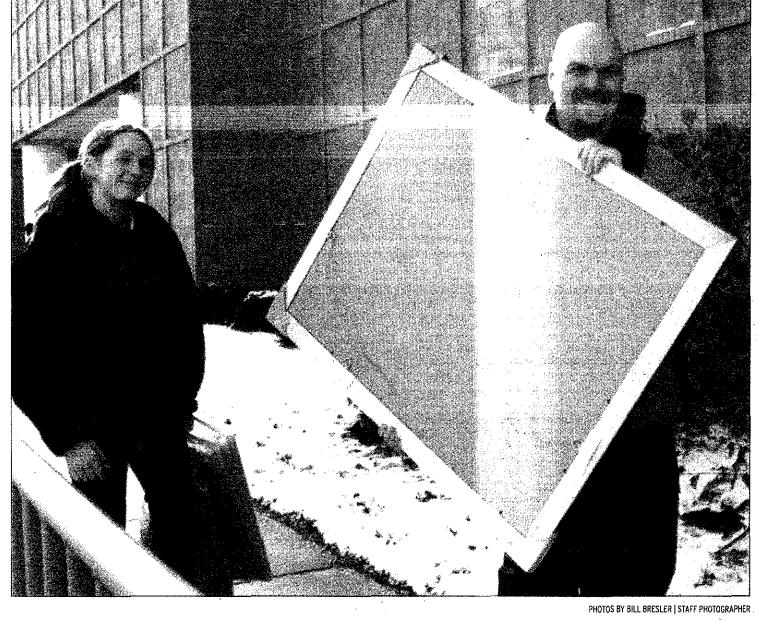
Kris Kringle's arrival at Livonia's Laurel Park Place came with much fan-fare. Santa was escorted by U.S.

The Community Hospice of **Westland has placed a Tree** of Memories at the shopping center, in remembrance of those who died this year. Purchase a gold angel at the mall or by calling (734) 522-4244.

Army National Guardsmen on a Chinook helicopter when he showed up Nov. 5 at the mall, at Six Mile and Newburgh

The stunt was part of a holiday effort to raise money for service members from Selfridge Air National Guard base and their families. Laurel Park Place is asking those who bring their kids to see Santa to bring a gas card, phone card or money to donate to the

Across town, Livonia Mall



Michael and Janet Williams leave Kohl's with a load of gifts. The Westland residents are nearly done with their holiday shopping.

offers visits with Santa from noon to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Şunday. Children receive a free gift with any visit. But they aren't the only ones expected to pose with the man in the red velvet suit.

This year, Livonia Mall is bringing back it's popular pet photo night. Pet owners can set up an appointment to bring in their dogs to have a photo taken with Santa on Monday, Dec. 5.

The mall is located at Seven

Mile and Middlebelt roads and caters to clientele from nearby cities, including Redford Township and Detroit. Gelman said the mall is proud to cater to a wide demographic of shoppers in a family-friendly environment.

"We're full for the holidays," said Gelman of the mall itself. "I think people will be pleasantly surprised. We have decorated and we have lots of holiday tenants."

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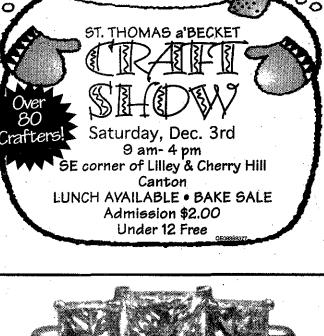
of Lessons and Carols Sunday, November 27th, 7:00 PM

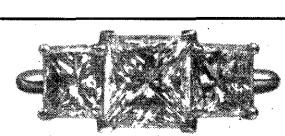


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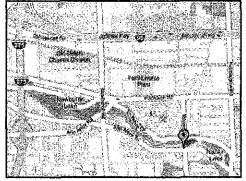
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Justin, Community Choice Member on his soapbox about financial institutions.

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new round of criticism is being fired at Livonia in recent weeks because city voters approved a tax measure that will pull Livonia from the regional bus system.

In recent weeks, misguided media critics blasted city leaders and portrayed the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation as a victim because SMART is going to lose \$2.8 million in annual funding from Livonia taxpay-

However, it was SMART's inefficiencies and apathy that motivated the Livonia City Council

to place the issue on the ballot. which received approval from 55 percent of city voters.

The timing of the SMART election was not good for Livonia's public relations as it comes three months after some residents made comments about Detroit residents regarding the Wal-Mart Supercenter proposal at the old Wonderland Mall.

Some media analysis in recent weeks tried to tie the SMART

vote to the perception that Livonia is a racist community. This is unfounded as race had nothing to do with the debate leading up to the election. Opt-out proponents said their motivation was economic and they were tired of seeing large empty buses cruise through town. The most-vocal opt-out opponents were Livonia residents who use the park-and-ride program who were also concerned about local employers' ability to staff their businesses.

SMART ANGERED CITY

Like many municipalities in recent years. Livonia officials are looking for ways to make ends meet with its tight budget. Anticipating little support for a tax increase, officials found SMART to be expendable since less than 1 percent of city residents use the service.

The approved tax shift plan will generate more revenue for the city without any tax increase. Instead of sending 0.6-mill in taxes to SMART, Livonia taxpayers will send 0.5-mill to city hall to produce \$2.4 million a year for a local bus system for senior citizens and disabled persons, and for new police cars, public facility repairs and other capital improvements.

The origins for a Livonia revolt against SMART started in 2001 when city leaders pleaded with SMART officials to upgrade the service so more residents would use it and justify SMART's existence in Livonia. After appeasing Livonia leaders to stay on board, SMART announced plans to increase the tax levy from 0.33-mill to 0.6-mill before the SMART renewal election in 2002.

That infuriated city officials because they learned of the tax hike after the city council's opt-out deadline passed. While 53 percent of Livonia residents voted against the 2002 tax renewal, Livonia was stuck in the system for another four years because the regional majority

approved the renewal.

LITTLE USE

As the city council escalated opt-out talks this past spring, SMART officials appeared indifferent. They made no passionate pleas for Livonia to stay on board as the city council discussed the proposal at a public meeting in May.

As the opt-out campaign gained steam, research produced more evidence for propo-

■ Some Livonia officials said it would cost less than \$2.8 million a year to pay for daily cab fare for all who need public transportation to reach their jobs in Livonia.

There are already 53 other communities in SMART's jurisdiction, including all towns west of Livonia, that do not participate in the system. Some of those Canton, Plymouth and Northville residents come to Livonia to use the park-andride system, but they don't pay any taxes for it.

MSMART's cost inefficiencies are fueled by competition with the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT). Buses from both systems race to bus stops to compete for riders and fares. Both systems send buses to Livonia as a DDOT bus makes a regular stop at Millennium Park located at Middlebelt and Schoolcraft.

All of Livonia's council members said they support a functional public transportation system. However, they added it's tough to support SMART's fragmented, inefficient organization during these difficult economic times.

BIG PICTURE

It's up to the Michigan Legislature to come up with an efficient transportation system that fairly disburses costs and services. It's also up to lawmakers to come up with a better way to finance local units of government as the state's biggest cities, such as Livonia, have lost millions in revenue-sharing grants in recent years because of the state's economic troubles.

Only state lawmakers have the authority to restructure DDOT and SMART. Democratic U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow recently garnered \$100 million in federal funding to come up with such a plan.

Media scrutiny should be directed to this process, and not on calling Livonia voters "short-sighted" because its residents decided not to throw money at an inefficient bus system they doesn't use.

It's unfair to single out Livonia when there are 53 neighboring communities that are not involved in SMART. Critics need to look at a much bigger picture when considering ways to revamp metro Detroit's public transportation system because it needs lot more than Livonia's

Dan West is a staff writer for the Livonia Observer. He can be reached at (734) 953-2109, or at dwest@oe.homecomm.net.

Sorry, media critics, SMART's | 'Arc of Justice' is a timely read for metro high school students

he popular community wide reading programs were initiated by the Washington Center for the Book in 1998. The idea has spread to communities across the country with the support of the Library of Congress and the American Library Association.

It seems that everyone is latching on to the idea that reading becomes more fun and more meaningful if the experience is shared, discussed and debated with others.

In Topeka, Kan., they've been reading Julie Otsuka's When the

Gallagher

Emperor Was Divine and in El Dorado they've been getting reacquainted with the American classic Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird. Nobody's reading Darwin in Kansas, of course.

In Alaska, where everyone in the state reads the same book, they read Alfred Lansing's Endurance: Shackleton's Voyage this year, which would seem to be a subject that

Alaskans wouldn't want to be reminded about. Here in Michigan, there seems to be a real desire by the promoters of these community reads to use them to bridge our racial and cultural divides. In Ann Arbor this year they read Amin Maalouf's Leo Africanus, in Chelsea it was Naomi Shihab Nye's Habbi, in Lansing and Muskegon Christopher Paul Curtis' children's book The Watsons Go to Birmingham. Others have taken a different approach, in Southwest Michigan they read Homer Hickam's Rocket Boys and in Traverse Peter Hamil's Snow in August.

The idea, of course, is to get people talking about books. The books aren't always about "serious" issues or currently compelling ideas. They might have a regional appeal or they might just be a fun read. Some books are current, several communities have been reading Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner. But East Lansing read Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 in 2002 and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein in 2003. In Ann Arbor they've been promoting science by letting residents choose from several science books for the 2006 community read. Jonathan Weiner's The Beak of the Finch will be on everyone's nightstand in Ann Arbor next year.

Even the pre-schoolers have a statewide community read. Several books are currently in the running and a vote will decide which book the little tykes will be listening to. In this spirit I would like to propose a high

school read for the metro Detroit area. I know the objections to this idea already.

Students are burdened enough with lots of reading, especially those on the college track. They also have to apply to colleges, take tests, keep some semblance of a social life and, in many cases, work a part-time job. Who has time to add another book to that pile?

Even the pre-schoolers have a statewide community read. Several books are currently in the running and a vote will decide which book the little tykes will be listening to.

But I think the book is important enough and relevant enough to warrant some consid-

While the decline of the auto industry and a stubbornly sluggish economy are causing misery throughout the area, it is race that still

fuels a lot of discussion, concern, uneasiness. Last year Kevin Boyle's Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights and Murder in the Jazz Age won the National Book Award for nonfiction. Boyle tells the story of Ossian Sweet, a black doctor, who moved his family from Detroit's Black Bottom to a bungalow in a working class white section of Detroit in 1925.

Sweet realized he would be faced by a white mob, as had others before him in other white sections of the city. He, his wife and friends were armed when a white mob formed outside and began throwing rocks. A shot was fired from the house and a man was killed. Sweet, his wife Gladys and nine others were charged with murder.

The NAACP took on the case as a cause celebre, a chance to stand up for the rights of black Americans to live wherever they could afford to live and protect their property. They hired the famous trial lawyer Clarence Darrow to head the defense.

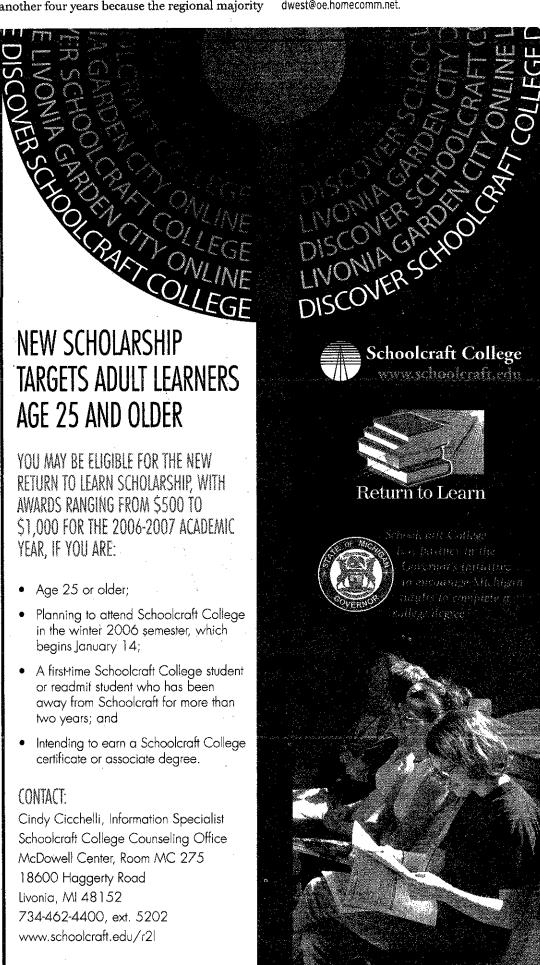
Boyle's book, now in paperback, recounts the migration of black Americans from the south to the north, lured as were white Americans from the east by jobs in the auto industry. He describes the special place of a new and rising black middle class and the special burdens on what W.E.B. Dubois called the "Talented Tenth." He also describes a Detroit in the 1920s that was heavily influenced by a resurgent Ku Klux Klan, but also had a concerned group of white progressives led by Judge Frank

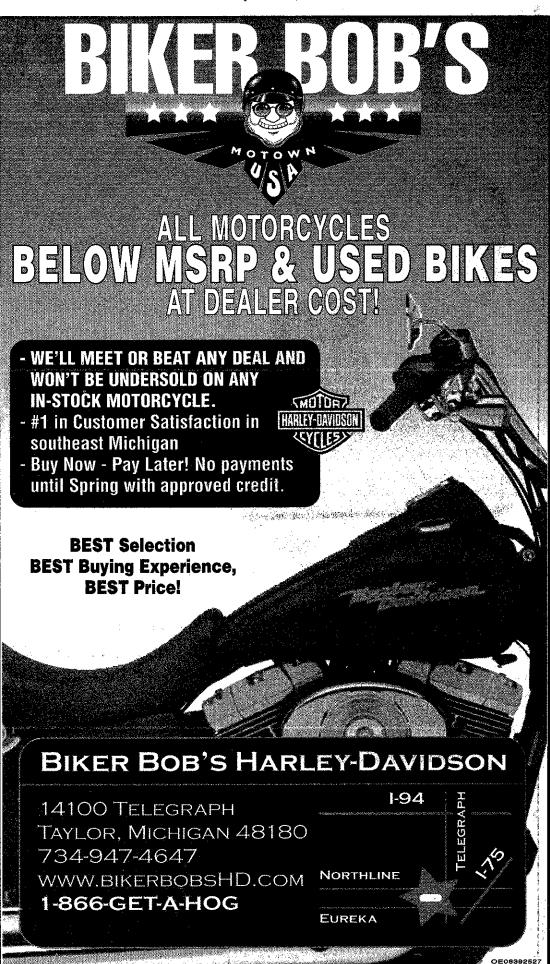
The book is brilliantly written, with wonderful portrayals of NAACP president and poet James Weldon Johnson, his successor Walter White and the great, and complicated, Darrow. Best of all, he describes the elements that have helped create our sadly divided and antagonistic metro area.

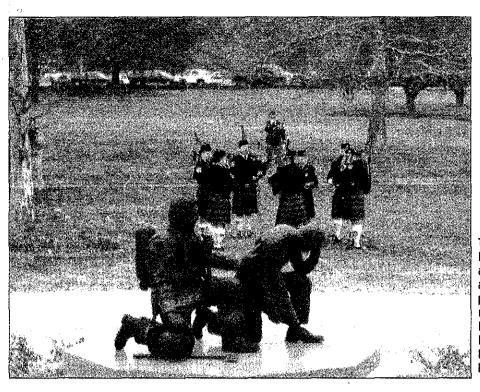
It is a book that every high school student should read, discuss, understand to appreciate why the place they call home is what it is.

It's a good read and an important one as

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







Detroit Police and Fire Pipe and Drum Corps performs at the unveiling of the Michigan Fallen Heroes Memorial in

New memorial pays tribute to fallen police, firefighters

STAFF WRITER

Hundreds of police officers and firefighters from communities all over Michigan came to Pontiac Monday to witness the unveiling of the Michigan Fallen Heroes Memorial on the north end of the Oakland County administrative campus.

The memorial features a firefighter and police officer, cast in bronze, kneeling before granite tablets engraved with the names of police and firefighters lost in the line of duty since 1864.

There are currently 761 names on the memorial and more will be added on an annual basis as more pass away and more are discovered historically. Since the unveiling of Phase I of the project in September of 2002, 19 police officers and firefighters have been added to the list.

The event, emceed by WOMC deejay Dick Purtan, featured prayers, remembrances by families of the fall-

en, a 21-gun salute by Oakland County Sheriff's deputies and a performance of Amazing Grace by the bagpipers of the Metro Detroit Police and Fire Pipe

and Drum Corps. County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said his years as a prosecutor and as the county's lead administrator has given him many opportunities to meet and interact with police and firefighters in Michigan.

"I've witnessed firsthand the courage of public safety officers," he said. "Everyday these men and women place themselves in harm's way. The people of Oakland County are proud of the quality of life here and that is enhanced by the police and fire departments serving here."

Equal to their courage, he said, is that of the families left behind by the tragedies inherent to public safety work.

Oakland County Sheriff's Chaplain William Waldmann said there are a number of support groups for families of the fallen both on the local and

"They take care of one another," Waldmann said. When the incident is new they're very tight and they keep in touch throughout."

Eton Rapids Township Supervisor Linda Wilbur came to the unveiling Monday. Her husband, township Fire Chief Richard Wilbur, died in the line of duty nearly two years ago. She said the monument in Pontiac was a great tribute to him and others like him.

"I had been to the state (firefighter's) memorial in Roscommon and the national memorial (in Maryland)," Wilbur said. "This is nice, it's certainly a lot closer to home."

She said she's received a lot of support from groups connected with the national and state survivor's groups. Since visiting the national memorial. she's been talking to others via e-mail.

"It's nice to know you're not the only one having the same problems and feelings," Wilbur

WSU supports 'Kalamazoo Promise'

Wayne State University announced that students who enroll for fall 2006 at the university under The Kalamazoo Promise program will be offered a 50 percent reduction in their room costs in the WSU

residence halls. « The offer will be good for four years to participating students providing they remain eligible for and are in receipt of a tuition scholarship from The Kalamazoo Promise.

The Kalamazoo Promise, unveiled this week by the Kalamazoo Public Schools, will provide free tuition to school district graduates to attend a public college or university in Michigan. Funding is provided

by a group of anonymous

"This is our way of demonstrating support for both the visionary donors underwriting the program and Gov. Jennifer Granholm's challenge to Michigan's universities to encourage citizens to pursue higher education," said Wayne State University President Irvin D. Reid. "We are proud to offer this incentive to our students as a further enhancement of the university's admissions strategy of providing affordable access to education."

During the last academic year, Wayne State offered more than \$185 million in financial aid. Financial aid counselors

are available to work with students and parents regarding their financial aid options.

For more information about financial aid and admission to Wayne State University, visit www.admissions.wayne.edu; phone (313) 577-3577; e-mail admissions@wayne.edu; or mail to: Office of Undergraduate Admissions,

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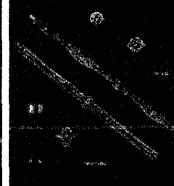
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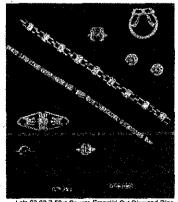
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