

## All-Area girls golf team selected

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## Coaching dads

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Equipment can make playgrounds safer

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HOMETOWNlife

SUNDAY

June 18, 2006

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John Glenn seniors Alex Wynn and Jeff Dillon work with Construction Technology 1 teacher John Warra at William D. Ford Career Technical Center.

## Surprise, surprise

Students' essays win teacher national technology award

BY SUE MASON  
STAFF WRITER

When John Warra told his students to go online to apply for scholarships, he didn't expect that he would be getting something out of it.

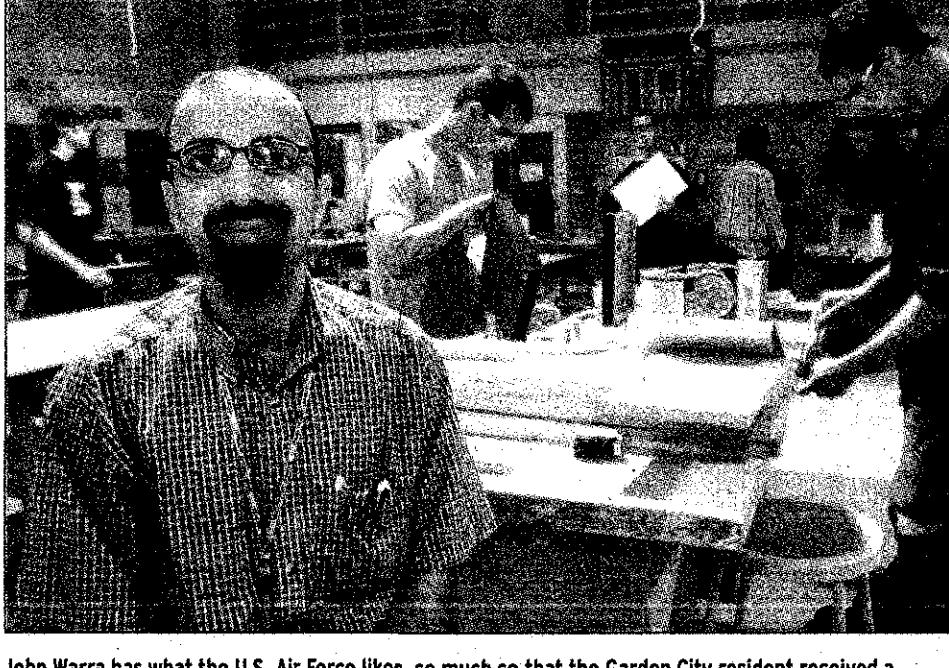
That something was being named a Technology Education Outstanding Teacher of the Year by the U.S. Air Force.

Warra, who teaches the Construction Tech I class at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center, is one of 250 teachers in the country to receive the honor after being nominated by several of his students.

"When I was told, I really couldn't believe it," said Warra, who received the award during a staff meeting from Tech. Sgt. Adam Hessler of the U.S. Air Force Recruiting Station in Westland. "I just come to work to do a job, the plus is to get an award like that."

The Internet page Warra had his students visit was Technology Education's Web site, [www.teched1010.com](http://www.teched1010.com), where

PLEASE SEE AWARD, A4



John Warra has what the U.S. Air Force likes, so much so that the Garden City resident received a Technology Education Outstanding Teacher Award. Warra teaches Construction Technology I at the William D. Ford Career Technical Center in Westland.

## Police beware – firefighters out for blood

Westland residents bled blue the last time local police officers and firefighters competed to recruit the most blood donors.

Last year's good-natured Battle of the Badges contest left firefighters seeing red, and now they're out for blood – literally.

The two groups will compete again from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday at the Bailey Recreation Center — a contest that will kick off the Battle of the Badges for all of southeastern Michigan.

Police officers and firefighters are busy

signing up friends, relatives and residents to donate blood. They're handing out poker chips — blue for the police, red for the firefighters — to donors.

In turn, donors will turn in their poker chips during Monday's blood drive, and the chips will be counted to see which department receives this year's Gold Blood Bag Award.

Donors who aren't recruited by the public safety departments may call Mayor Sandra Cicirelli's office at (734) 467-3200 to make an appointment. The

event will help the American Red Cross.

"The Red Cross is in dire need of blood because of a decline in donations and an increase in usage," Cicirelli said in a prepared statement. "The Battle of the Badges was won last year by the police department, and I am told that this year the fire department is seeking to even the record."

On a more serious note, Cicirelli said, "The real winners are the people who will need blood this summer due to medical emergencies or illness."

PLEASE SEE FESTIVAL, A4

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Volume 42 Number 7



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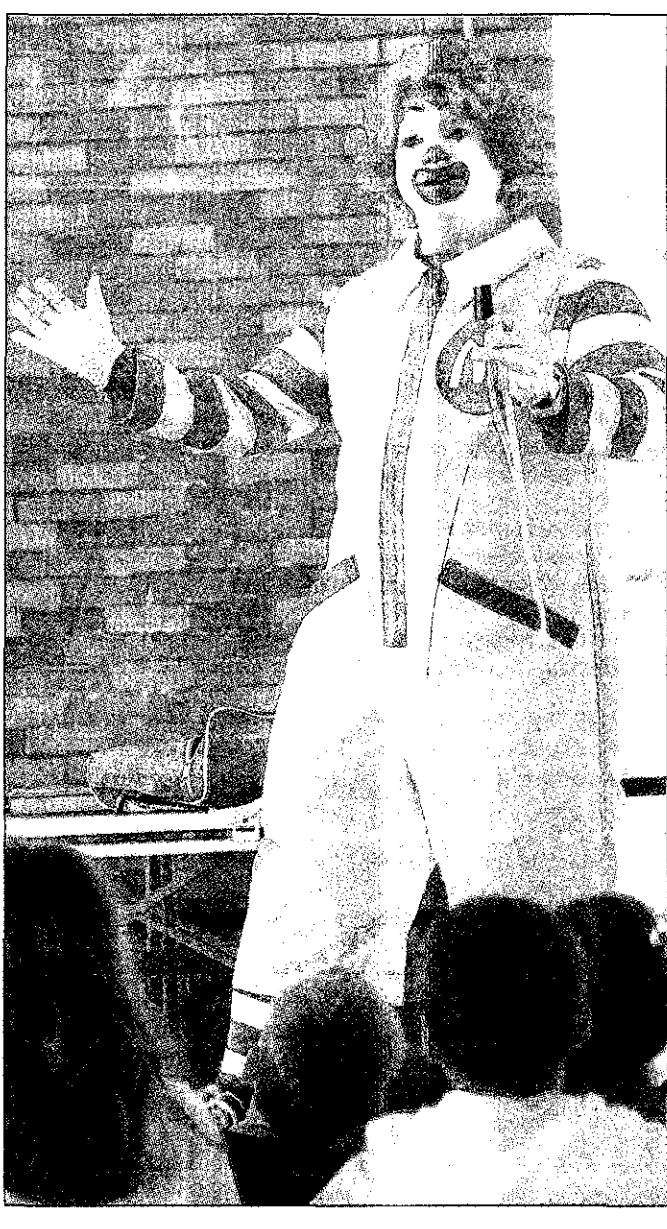
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Coming Thursday in Filter

Show in the sky

Check the next issue of Filter for your guide to all the area fireworks shows.





TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Fun with Ronald**

Ronald McDonald entertains the children attending the Afternoon Delight Summer Series Wednesday at City Park in Garden City. It was the kick-off event for the six-week series featuring entertainment and activities.

**Task force offers free golf for youths**

Mayor Sandra Cicirelli's Task Force on Substance Abuse & Violence is offering free golf to city youths ages 11 to 14 years old. Free lessons will be offered July 10, 12 and 14 at the Westland Municipal Golf Course, on Merriman Road south of Cherry Hill.

A free golf outing also will be offered for children of the same age 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, July 15, at the golf

course. Parents can register for the lessons or the outing by calling the mayor's office at (734) 467-3200. A parent is required to attend the outing with a child. "This yearly event has proven to be the task force's most popular program in the past, and anyone who thinks their children may be interested should sign up early because space is limited," Cicirelli said in a statement.

Senior citizens living in Taylor Towers should call their building manager for their day of distribution.

Food distributed for the month of June will include tuna, apple juice, mixed fruit and northern beans.

For more information, call the Dorsey Center surplus food hotline at (734) 595-0366.

The program is administered by the Wayne County Office of Senior Services.

**Flag Day proves special for city worker**

Westland's Flag Day ceremony took on new significance Wednesday for Margaret Martin, who was given a perfectly folded flag in honor of her late father Glenn, a World War II veteran who served in Europe.

Martin received Old Glory during an annual Flag Day ceremony between Westland City Hall and the Bailey Recreation Center, where she works as a program supervisor.

She was presented the flag by a color guard composed of members of the U.S. Army recruiting office in Westland, Boy

Scout Troop 744 and the VFW Harris-Kehrer Post 3323.

"They folded the flag and presented it to me," Martin said, adding that her family had never received a flag in honor of a father. "He died 22 years ago."

The color guard also raised a U.S. flag on a flagpole between the two city buildings, and trumpeter Bennie Clemente, who just finished eighth grade at Stevenson Middle School, played *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

"He plays the trumpet beautifully," Martin said.

Mark Patterson, a 14-year-old member of Boy Scout Troop 744, led the pledge of allegiance, and local dignitaries made brief speeches during the city's annual observance of Flag Day.

With her guitar in hand, Martin played and the crowd sang to *America the Beautiful*, *God Bless America*, *This Is My Country*, and *This Land Is Your Land*.

The crowd, estimated at 40 people, also sang *Happy Birthday* to the flag.

Even Mother Nature did her part to make the event a success. Said Martin, "The weather couldn't have been nicer."

**Event to help police motorcycle unit**

Westland police and the Westland Jaycees will sponsor a Vegas night and Texas Hold 'Em tournament starting at 5 p.m. Saturday, June 24, at the Wayne-Ford Civic League, on Wayne Road south of Ford.

The event will raise money for the Westland Police Department's motorcycle unit. Officers are trying to raise money for a radio system for their bikes to make their jobs safer and to communicate while on patrol, Officer Matthew Bobby said.

The system will cost about \$8,500.

**Distribution set**

Westland city officials have announced the next distribution of federal surplus food.

Most residents north of Michigan Avenue will pick up their commodities from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursday, June 22, at the Dorsey Community Center, on Dorsey south of Palmer and east of Venoy.

Residents south of the avenue would get their commodities Monday, June 19, at St. James United Methodist Church, 30055 Annapolis between Henry Ruff and Middlebelt roads.

Senior citizens living in Taylor Towers should call their building manager for their day of distribution.

Food distributed for the month of June will include tuna, apple juice, mixed fruit and northern beans.

For more information, call the Dorsey Center surplus food hotline at (734) 595-0366.

The program is administered by the Wayne County Office of Senior Services.

Registration for the Texas Hold 'Em Tournament will be at 5 p.m. Saturday, June 24, and playing will start at 6 p.m. Top cash prize is \$500.

The Vegas night will be 8 p.m. to midnight, featuring such games as Blackjack and Let It Ride.

The event is being sponsored by the Westland Jaycees. Organizers are looking for table sponsors from local businesses. Cost for a sponsorship is \$100.

Sponsors or donors should make checks



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## Businessman's donation supports horse camp program for children with cancer

BY STEPHANIE ANGELYN CASOLA  
STAFF WRITER

Camp Casey, a horse camp program designed for children fighting cancer, reaches out to those in need every month during the summer.

When founder Molly Melamed was in need of a trailer for the program, her charitable efforts came full-circle.

"They needed a trailer donated, and after sending out letters, a Livonia businessman donated a beautiful trailer," said Barry Melamed, Molly's father and president of the Camp Casey board of directors.

Just two days after letters were mailed out, Doug Vandenberg, owner of Joe's Trailer Mfg., Inc. in Livonia, responded.

"They're program sounded really good," said Vandenberg. "We thought we'd help them out."

His small company donated a 5-by-8-foot trailer worth \$1,600 to the program. It is enclosed and water-proof, he said, and being used to transport saddles and horse equipment to farms where the camps are offered.

Molly Melamed founded the camp three years ago. At the time she was a journalism stu-

dent at Michigan State University in East Lansing. Melamed worked as a horseback riding instructor at a horse farm in the nearby town of Haslett.

There, she met a young girl named Casey Foote, who shared her love for animals. Casey suffered from bone and brain cancer.

"No matter how sick she was when she was around the horses she felt great," Molly Melamed recalled. "She had a huge impact on everyone at the barn."

Casey died in August 2002. In an effort to create something special in her memory, Melamed established Camp Casey to bring joy to children who were battling the disease.

"This is a huge passion of mine," said Melamed, originally from Farmington Hills.

She worked with barn owners, veterinary and nursing students from MSU, and staff members at Sparrow Hospital, to create the first volunteer-run camp. Children with cancer and their siblings were invited to spend a day riding horses, creating arts and crafts and enjoying themselves. Since its start, the program has only continued to grow.

"This year there has been such a response from all the

hospitals, we're taking the show on the road," said Melamed.

The new trailer allows the program to move into the metro Detroit area, and reach children referred by the University of Michigan Hospital, William Beaumont Hospitals and Children's Hospital of Detroit.

"For something so small, we're able to reach so many more children," she said.

Now a full-fledged non-profit operating on a small budget, Camp Casey will be offered at area barns. Owners have volunteered their horses and property for the day.

"You really do get to see the good in people," said Melamed.

The camps are tailored to the children who attend, though most are between 6- and 13-years-old. Volunteers are trained to work with children who have cancer, and safety procedures are in place, Melamed said.

Camp Casey will be offered three times this summer: June 24 in Davisburg, July 8 in South Lyon, and Aug. 26 in Lansing.

For more information about the non-profit Michigan program or to donate to the cause, visit [www.camp-casey.org](http://www.camp-casey.org). scasola@hometownlife.com | (734) 953-2054

### AWARD

FROM PAGE A1

students could apply for scholarships.

At the end of the application, students were asked to submit a short essay about why their teacher should receive the award.

"I'm not sure how many wrote, I'm sure it was more than one, but I don't know who it was," the Garden City resident said about the nominations. "It would be nice to know."

The Air Force has supported Technology Education's shop-safety program for more than 20 years by providing free safety posters and similar materials.

"The Air Force is very proud to support America's technology education teachers. We're pleased to honor these 250 outstanding teachers and to let them know how much their students appreciate them," said Master Sgt. Joe Hunter with the Headquarters U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service.

A 1988 graduate of the program he's now a part of, Warra started his career at the Career Technical Center in 1991 when

he was asked to apply and then got a teaching assistant's position.

Warra teaches the first-year portion of the center's two-year construction program, imparting on his students with a positive attitude and the importance of attention to detail and teamwork.

"I explain what happens when half the team isn't there," Warra said.

The class provides hands-on experience for students and prepares them to help building a home during the second year. Part of this year's experience was the re-siding of the Octagon House in the Westland Historic Village Park.

"All the things they've done adds to the experience," Warra said. "The kids were excited, I was excited. It was an exciting year, but a tiring year because I added more stuff to the curriculum."

Warra has his builder's license and owns his own construction company, using his summer vacation to build one or two homes and doing remodeling jobs. He has done work on commercial buildings

and even remodeled a tanning salon.

"I keep pretty active and up to date with the latest technology to bring it back to the classroom," he said.

As an outstanding teacher award winner, Warra is now in the running for the 2006 Technology Education Outstanding Teacher of the Year.

The winner's photograph and biographical profile will be printed in the 2006-07 Technology Education planning guide, a 12-month teacher's planner that's distributed to more than 30,000 high school teachers nationwide.

In addition to Warra winning the award, one of his students did receive a \$500 scholarship from the Web site — junior Bradley Noyes, who will be going into Construction Tech II next year.

"He'll use it to further his education," Warra said. "He wants to go into construction management. He's a straight-A student in the program. It couldn't have happened to a better student."

[smason@hometownlife.com](mailto:smason@hometownlife.com) | (734) 953-2112

### FESTIVAL

FROM PAGE A1

"Everything is falling into place," he said, "but we could use more volunteers."

To help, call Mehl at the earlier-listed phone number.

In another festival development, a local organization called Grange 389 will sponsor a pet contest and is asking for people to drop off pictures of their pets at the Bailey Recreation Center, behind City Hall.

The pictures will be shown at the festival, and festival-goers can vote for the best pet by dropping money into containers. Proceeds will go to Paws with a Cause, a group that trains leader dogs to help people with disabilities.

Best pets will be chosen in three categories — dogs, cats and other pets. For more information, call Grange 389 president Sharon Strebbing at (734) 722-4857.

Here's more from the festival schedule of events:

On Thursday, June 29, the

festival parade will start about 6:15 p.m. and move from the Wayne-Ford Civic League to City Hall. At 8 p.m., the festival beauty pageant will be held on the main stage.

On Friday, June 30, the festival will open at 3 p.m. and feature events such as a golf-chipping contest at 6 p.m., a horseshoe-pitching contest at 6 p.m. and a performance by Alexander Zonjic & Friends at 8:30 p.m.

Visitors also can see a mobile Detroit Pistons basketball display.

On Saturday, July 1, the festival will open at noon and feature a "mad science show" at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.; Richard Paul puppet shows at 3 p.m., 4:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.; a horseshoe-pitching contest at 1 p.m.; a golf-chipping contest at 3 p.m.; and a performance by Impact Seven at 8 p.m.

On Monday, July 3, the festival will open at noon and include a pie-eating contest at 3 p.m.; a hula hoop contest at 3:30 p.m.; a women's and men's legs contest at 4 p.m.; a longest ponytail contest at 4:30 p.m.; an ice-cream eating contest at 5 p.m.; and a performance by Ms. Chelsea Oaks at 8 p.m.

On Tuesday, July 4, the festival will open at noon and feature a baby and toddler contest at noon; a mad science show at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m.; a medley of Neil Diamond songs by singer David James at 2 p.m.; a performance by the TLT Singers at 3 p.m.; and a performance by Second Wind at 7 p.m.

The festival will end Tuesday with a fireworks display about 10:15 p.m.  
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**Ficano visits**

Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano will be the guest speaker at a joint luncheon meeting of the Garden City and Westland Rotary clubs at 12:15 p.m. Thursday at the VFW Hall, 28945 Joy in Westland.

The cost is \$10 per person and the public is welcome. For more information, call Mark McConnell at (734) 421-5510.

**Coffee with Glenn**

State Rep. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, has announced that his next local coffee hour with his constituents will be 9:10:30 a.m. Monday, June 19, at the Westland Big Boy restaurant, 6360 N. Wayne Road at Hunter. Citizens are welcome to visit with Anderson to discuss issues and concerns.

**AMVETS events**

AMVETS Post 171 and the auxiliary will have a breakfast 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, June 25, at the AMVETS hall at 1217 Merriman Road, said spokeswoman Pat Weldon. Cost is \$4 for adults and \$2 for children. Also, the auxiliary will sponsor a blood drive 1-7 p.m.

Wednesday, June 28, at the same location. No appointment is necessary.

"We need 20 pints of blood," Weldon said.

**Lincoln roundtable**

Famed historian and author Frank O'Reilly is the scheduled guest speaker when the Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table gets together 8 p.m. Thursday, June 22, at the Plymouth Historical Museum.

O'Reilly is the author of *The Fredericksburg Campaign: Winter War on the Rappahannock*, hailed as the definitive study on the Battle of Fredericksburg. In addition, he has served for several years as staff historian at the

Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania National Military Park. O'Reilly is renowned as speaker, guide and authority on Civil War subjects.

The Plymouth Historical Museum is located at 155 S. Main, at Church, in downtown Plymouth. The public is invited, and admission free. For more information call (734) 459-7324.

**Enrollment offered**

St. Damian Catholic School is accepting enrollment for fall. It offers preschool for children ages 3 and 4, kindergarten either three full days or five full days, and classes for students in grades one through eight. The school is located at 28981 Joy Road in Westland.

Summer hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. For information call (734) 421-6130.

**Antiques appraisals**

The Westland senior Friendship Center will host its fifth annual Newburgh Road Show, an antiques appraisal, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, July 28.

Admission will be \$1. Col. Thomas Moody of Blue Willow Antiques will be doing the appraisals. He specializes in glass, pottery, furniture, radios, kitchenware, war memorabilia, quilts, dolls and toys.

There will be a charge of \$3 per item appraised, with a limit of three appraisals. Refreshments will be available for a small donation.

The Friendship Center is at 1119 N. Newburgh, south of Ford, Westland. For more information, call (734) 722-7628.

**'Remember When'**

Bonnie Hilberer will be at the William P. Faust Public Library Wednesday, June 21, for a seminar on preserving memories.

Hilberer will teach participants how to preserve life events to create an oral history of a parent or grandparent's life.

Each participant will receive a copy of the book, *Just a Few Memories to Share*, to help them organize their memories and translate family history into print.

The workshop is free, but participants need to register in advance at the library's reference desk.

The library is at 6123 Central City Parkway, north of Ford Road. For more information, call (734) 326-6123.

**Pancake breakfast**

The Westland senior Friendship Center holds an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast 8:30-11 a.m. the second Thursday of the month at the center on Newburgh south of Ford.

The cost \$4 per person for buttermilk or multi-grain pancakes, coffee, juice, low fat milk, sausage and bacon. Sugar free syrup will be available.

**Eclectic Crafters**

Ever thought of trying a craft but were afraid of investing

ing too much before you knew if you were going to like it? Ever wanted a quiet place to do your scrapbooking? Ever wonder if there are others as crazy about art and crafts as you are?

The answer to those questions could be the Eclectic Crafters which meet 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the second and third Monday of every month and 5:30-8:30 p.m. the first Monday from at the Bailey Center in the Westland Civic Center Complex on Ford Road west of Carlson.

The program is offered in association with the Westland Parks and Recreation Department. For \$3, participants can try out different crafts, art materials and tools or bring their own project to work on. There will be inexpensive make-and-takes available.

For more information, call (734) 620-3938.

**Senior volleyball**

The Westland senior citizen Friendship Center hopes to start a co-ed volleyball team to compete in Wayne County's 2006 Senior Olympics.

If interested, call Mel Tockstein at (734) 722-0159.

## Herniated Disc Technology Discovered by NASA Scientists

Ann Arbor - A new free report has recently been released that reveals how breakthrough medical technology is offering new hope for sciatica sufferers. Discover how research has proven non-surgical decompression 86% successful in treating debilitating back pain. Find out how NASA's accidental discovery led to the most promising treatment today. For your free report entitled, "How Space Age Technology Is Solving Back Pain Without Drugs Or Surgery!" Call 1-800-469-3618 for the toll-free recorded message. Supplies are limited - call now. If phone lines are busy, visit: [www.midischemiation.com](http://www.midischemiation.com)

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## INFORMATION CENTRAL

When it comes to movies, the old saying "they sure don't make them like they used to" is certainly true. Today's movies would have shocked the Hollywood studios of the 1930s and 1940s.

In the classic age of Hollywood, called the "studio era," the major studios had tremendous power over the lives of the stars under contract. Today, it is the actors alone who have the power.

In the 1930s, directors made movies under an actual code of decency called the Hays code, which kept the movies clean and wholesome. The general principles of the code dictated that:

- No picture shall be produced that will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrongdoing, evil or sin.

- Correct standards of life, subject only to the requirements of drama and entertainment, shall be presented.

- Law, natural or human, shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation.

- Brutal killings are not to be presented in detail.

- The use of firearms should be restricted to the essentials.

- Illegal drug traffic must never be presented.

Compared to the movies of today it is clear there are no standards anymore, unless it is to see how far directors can go in depicting the very worst side of life and the details of crime, not to mention the nudity.

If you are someone who prefers the older movies you will find that the selection at large video stores is not very good. The William P. Faust Public Library of Westland offers many classic

movies on VHS and currently has been adding to the DVD collection.

New DVD's include a box set of Bette Davis films with *The Letter*, *The Star*, *Dark Victory*, *Of Human Bondage*, *Now Voyager* and *Mr. Skeffington*.

The library also has several films with the greatest studio era star of all time, Joan Crawford. Crawford maintained her career more than 50 years and made many excellent movies. The library has *Mildred Pierce* (Oscar winning performance), *Humoresque*, *The Damned Don't Cry* and *Possessed*.

There are many other classics in our collection, such as *Casablanca*, *The Maltese Falcon*, *Gone With The Wind* and a full set of Sherlock Holmes films starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce.

Come in and check out our collection of classic movies. The library beats the video stores every time!

**Beginners Stamping with Carl:** 7 p.m. June 26.

Join us for a session of stamping as we create beautiful cards for many occasions. All supplies are provided. Call to register.

**The Varmint Police:** 2 p.m. July 8.

Raccoons and other rodents have been the bane of homeowners' existence for ages. Learn how to prevent mammalian mayhem with techniques from Sheryl Sutherland, Nuisance Animal Removal Expert. Call to register.

**Adult's/Young Adult's/Children's Summer Reading Programs:** June 10-July 29. Sign up for a whole summer of reading fun and prizes. See each department for details.

**Information Central** is compiled by Reference Librarian Bridget Sturdy, reference librarian at the William P. Faust Public Library, 6123 Central City Parkway, Westland. Call (734) 326-6123.

## Garden City Hospital bustling place

BY JULIE BROWN  
STAFF WRITER

Tom Daskalakis, chief operating officer at Garden City Hospital, knows most patients don't care for hospitals.

"They don't want to go because that's doom and gloom," Daskalakis told a luncheon crowd at Westland Rotary Thursday. His hospital offers a number of wellness programs, however, including massage, yoga, hypnosis and help with sleep disorders.

"We offer quite a bit of com-

munity education," he said.

The 323-bed hospital on Inkster Road has more than 1,000 full-time equivalent employees and more than 300 physicians, many also affiliated with Beaumont, Oakwood, the DMC and Henry Ford.

"We basically admit almost 11,000 patients a year," Daskalakis said. Some 42,000 are seen in the emergency room and 7,000 surgeries are done.

He noted the hospital's oncology care, more unusual for a community hospital, along with orthopedics and physical reha-

bilitation focusing both on neurology and post-joint replacement care. The independent hospital is also developing such areas as cardiac care. Daskalakis described a procedure involving veins and arteries surrounding the heart; in the past, patients weren't taken to smaller hospitals but that has changed.

"The ambulance will bring you to the closest site." A catheter is inserted in the fat deposit and a balloon presses plaque against the wall. Most patients don't then need open heart surgery, he said.

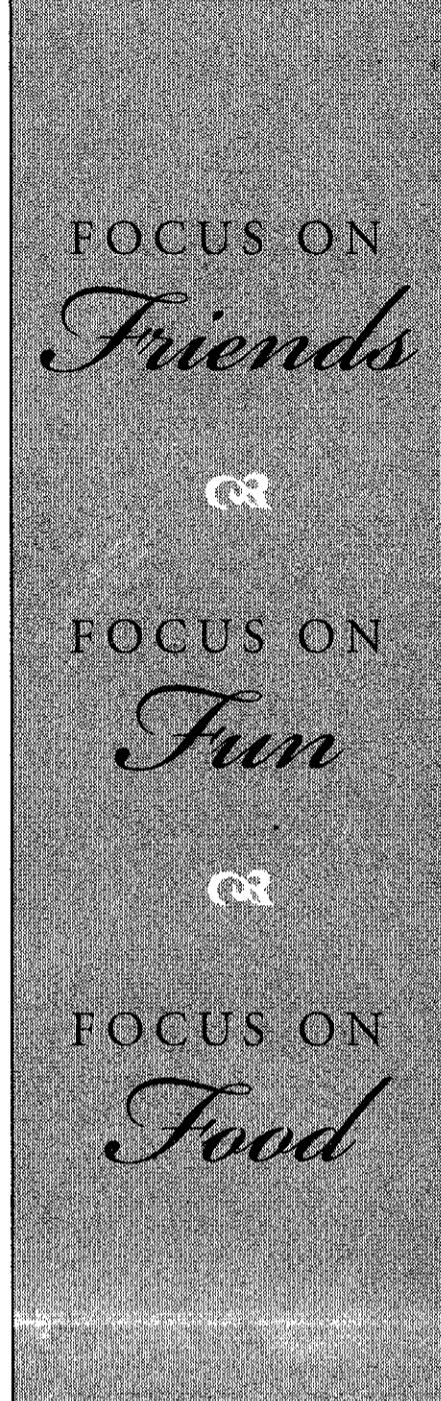
"This is the going approach now nationally."

Daskalakis also described technology at his hospital developed by NASA to detect early lung cancer.

"The reason why we were picked is because of the auto industry" and its emissions. At the hospital, the computer will "circle" an area for the doctor to check. "It allows us to detect lung cancer a lot sooner," he said Thursday at the Sgt.

Romanowski VFW Post in Westland.

Hospital officials hope to have a wound care and hyperbaric treatment endeavor in place by August at a Westland site.



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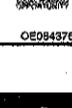
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# Zandstra out of GOP Senate race

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BY ALEX LUNDBERG  
STAFF WRITER

One of the three men running to replace Democratic Sen. Debbie Stabenow this fall has come up short on petition signatures, leaving two men to vie for the Republican nomination.

Jerry Zandstra, a member of the conservative Acton Institute's think tank, announced that he would no longer pursue a place on the Aug. 8 primary ballot. The announcement leaves Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard and the Rev. Keith Butler to slug it out for the Republican space on the November general election ballot.

Zandstra said he dropped

out of the race for the Republican Senate primary race after the Secretary of State's office said he fell short of the required number of petition signatures necessary to run.

"We disagreed and filed a challenge, but two of the four members of the board of canvassers were under indictment," he said. "When we got there, it seemed they were unfamiliar with the document we sent along prior."

The only option left to the campaign was to go to federal court to challenge the state's determination. The cost of making that move, and the time involved, made the decision for the campaign.

"There are only eight weeks to the primary and it would

cost between \$40,000 and \$50,000," Zandstra said. "We decided to abide by the board's decision."

As far as where he's throwing his support to, Butler or Bouchard, Zandstra is keeping those cards close to his vest right now. He said he would make an announcement about who he'd endorse, if anyone, at the Republican State Committee meeting tomorrow.

As for his campaign, he said he always thought he would be running on his economic credentials and talking about the state economy, but ended up talking about pro-life issues and the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative instead.

Bouchard said he's already picked up a few of Zandstra's endorsements, but for him the

race has always been about Stabenow.

"She's been our focus and that's where our attention will continue to be," Bouchard said. "We're in a single-state recession and she's been getting 'zero' ratings from the National Federation of Independent Business. That's where jobs are being created."

He said Stabenow also ranks low on national security issues, something he'd focus on if elected to office.

Butler said since western Michigan (Zandstra's home) skews more socially conservative than the rest of the state, his departure will help.

"I'm both an economic and social conservative," Butler said. "I've been involved in social conservative causes all



Zandstra



Bouchard



Butler

## Political battle is continuing over SBT

BY ALEX LUNDBERG  
STAFF WRITER

Now that the secretary of state is sifting through the near 500,000 petition signatures County Executive L. Brooks Patterson turned in to repeal the state's Single Business Tax, there's a chance that the tax could disappear very soon.

The SBT accounts for \$1.8 billion in revenues, the equivalent of 22 percent of the state's budget — or everything the state spends on higher education or corrections. If that funding disappears, how, or will, the revenues be replaced?

Citizen's Research Council Director for State Affairs Tom Clay said the SBT was hailed as progressive and wise when it was drafted in 1976.

"The legislature and the governor concluded the business

taxes had significant problems," he said. "The corporate income tax fluctuated wildly, there was a tax on inventory, a tax on corporate net worth. The conclusion was that consolidating into a single tax would be better."

At the time, value-added taxes were all the rage in Europe and Michigan was applauded for dumping seven taxes for one stable tax. A lot has changed since then. He said the SBT has become more complex since it was first drafted.

If the SBT disappears, the state is going to have to make some serious decisions.

"A solution will probably involve two or more taxes to replace the SBT," Clay said. "The problem here is that voters are looking at a black box, the people who advocate removing the SBT don't have proposals to replace it."

State Rep. Bob Gosselin, R-Troy, said it looks like the legislature will approve the petitions after they're found proper. As for replacing the revenue, he's not in favor of that.

"I hope they don't," he said. "I believe we're overtaxed and overregulated right now. We need true tax relief to encourage business and growth."

He said the state needs to

look at the money it's sending to Wayne County and other parts of the state for instances of waste that could be cut out entirely. That said, he doubts his fellow legislators will forego the entire \$1.8 billion and said plans that would replace only \$1 billion or \$1.2 billion would work to reduce the cost of state government well enough.

Following through on his State of the County promise to put the future of the state's Single Business Tax before the legislature, Patterson delivered nearly 400,000 petition signatures to the state.

He said that overshooting the 250,000 needed would give the margin of comfort to guarantee validation. The state will verify the signatures over the next 60 days and, if they're found valid, will pass them onto the legislature for a vote.

"Given the support I've heard, they will pass the legislation," Patterson said.

Because the effort to repeal the SBT is being done by petition drive, passage by the legislature will be the final act — no governor's signature is needed.

Patterson said leaders in the legislature have put together an ad hoc committee to consider alternate plans. He said the committee will be looking at

other states' approaches to see what makes them attractive to business and cobble together a plan that will work for Michigan.

State Rep. Marie Donigan, D-Royal Oak, said she has faith that the bipartisan committee will come up with a suitable replacement. Suitable, of course, as long as the replacement isn't worse than the status quo.

"It's important that the tax burden doesn't fall to the everyday residents of the state," Donigan said.

Patterson said the governor's insistence that the removal of the SBT be revenue-neutral may go by the wayside.

"The replacement might be only \$1.3 or \$1.4 billion; the difference will jump-start the state's economy," Patterson said. "History is on my side. When you cut taxes, businesses expand, they hire people who pay taxes and buy things."

The SBT doesn't need to be replaced, necessarily. What must happen to satisfy the state's constitution, Clay said, is that expenses and revenues must balance out. If the revenues generated by the SBT aren't replaced, or aren't replaced fully, the governor and legislature must start talking about spending cuts.

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## May election date makes the most sense for schools

I am writing on behalf of the Oakland County Superintendents' Association. The OCSA realizes that the issue of election dates has received much attention; and it is true that almost all of the school districts in our county chose the May option.

As the outgoing president of the OCSA, I want to express a viewpoint that provides perspective. Hopefully, political banter and suspicion can be set aside and be replaced by mutual respect and an understanding that differing views have a place in our democracy.

This May, residents throughout the state of Michigan had an opportunity to head to the polls on several issues. Items such as police and fire millages, library millages, nonhomestead renewals and vacant Board of Education seats were on ballots in several counties across the state.

I feel it is important to remind all citizens that under the Consolidated Election Law, which Oakland County Clerk Ruth Johnson co-sponsored, there are four election dates provided for governmental agencies and school districts.

It is true that most school systems chose the May date over November, February or August; but this choice should not be viewed as being suspect. In fact, the selection of this date is in harmony with the desire of school officials to maintain consistency and focus.

It makes little sense for candidates to join a board team in November. While individuals who run for these positions are committed, caring people, the learning curve is steep. The May election date permits new board members to function effectively, even in those first months of service. Forcing them to take on their new role after many of the key decisions are made would be wrong for several reasons.

First of all, please keep in mind that the Consolidated Election Law provided the choice of four days for a valid reason – local control.

Secondly, I would think that voters would expect their newly elected officials to begin their service in a time frame that permits them to contribute in an opportune manner to the issues at hand. Numerous time-sensitive matters must be addressed prior to the start of the school year. Joining the board in November would, at the very least, be unsettling. Furthermore, such timing would do little to ensure a consistent and productive board transition.

Lastly, school districts cannot afford to be, as the saying goes, "penny wise and dollar

**I must admit that I do find it interesting that school districts are being blamed for selecting a date that was provided in the law and maintains the most consistency. Many municipalities and county governments choose to have their primary elections in August. I hear little outcry relative to this date.**

foolish." Costs must be measured against effectiveness. One poorly prepared board member could easily cost the taxpayers more than a May election does.

The May date provides a chance for voters to focus on local issues. In contrast, a November election would take on a partisan look; and the large number of items on the ballot can tend to be a bit confusing to voters.

School elections tend to be nonpartisan and most citizens like it that way. In fact, according to the Secretary of State's office, there was a 63 percent jump in voter turnout during the May 2005 election.

I must admit that I do find it interesting that school districts are being blamed for selecting a date that was provided in the law and maintains the most consistency. Many municipalities and county governments choose to have their primary elections in August. I hear little outcry relative to this date.

Michigan's economy relies heavily on tourism, so there are now laws stating that schools must not start until after Labor Day. Why then, do we consider the May election date "stealth" and an August date acceptable? Isn't it true that there are fewer Michiganders home during the summer months? That being said, I believe in local control and trust my municipal colleagues have good reasons for maintaining an August election date.

The Oakland County School Superintendents believe we need to stop arguing about this issue.

Instead, we would like to see more legislators and elected officials focused and prepared to make a difference. Given the choices we had under the law, the May election date best helps us to do this. The law is relatively new. Let's give our voters time to adjust and help them understand the value of keeping politics out of school elections.

Al Roberts is superintendent of Clarkston Community Schools.

## Build solid foundation with early childhood programs

Investing in our youngest children is the best economic development tool we have as a state and nation. Don't take my word for it, ask a brain researcher or a Nobel Prize winning economist.

Brain research has been very clear for a number of years that nearly 85 percent of the brain's capacity is developed in the first five years of life. From the moment of birth to the time our children enter the formal years of schooling, their tiny brains are like sponges soaking up knowledge and emotion.

This scientific fact should make every sensible person take pause and ask, given this fact, why do we not begin the formal investment in education until a child is 5 or 6 years of age?

I recall leaving my home a few years back to give a speech on the importance of high-quality preschool education and my teenage daughter inquired where I was

going. When I told her I was going to give a speech on the value of investing in our youngest kids and that 85 percent of the brain is developed in the first few precious years of life, she looked at me with that "boy, are you old folks stupid" look and responded, "If that is so, why does school not begin for most kids until after that important time has passed, duh?"

If an inquisitive, snarky teen "gets it," you would think the resources for this critical investment would be flowing like miners seeking their fortune during the California gold rush.

Having served in leadership positions in both education and business, I have always believed that expenditures in quality education from the womb to the tomb are the best investment we can make as a state and nation. Investment in human capital will pay great dividends as we prepare for the disruptive global transformation that is taking place right before our very eyes.

Educators, researchers, child advocates and parents can make the impassioned and intense pleas for investing more of our limited state resources in quality preschool and K-12 education for reasons of fairness, moral and social justice.

Quotes such as "A mind is a terrible thing to waste" from the United Negro College Fund can tug at the heartstrings. These "soft" reasons for spending more tax dollars often fall on deaf ears from hardened business people and weary taxpayers who feel squeezed by tax burdens and ineffectual social programs.

However, along with the brain research data, the numbers clearly are convincing. Investing in high-quality preschool for all children has a high economic return. Yes, that is correct -- we should support high-quality education for our youngest children under the arguments of fairness, moral

and social justice, but also because it has an economic payback to society at large.

We know in the 21st century economy that a child without a solid education today will be an adult without much opportunity for a productive future tomorrow. We also know that once a child falls behind, they are likely to remain behind. While a policy of human capital neglect may have fit our industrialization model of the past, we cannot afford that type of policy in today's global, "world is flat" society.

Children coming of age without a solid educational foundation on which to grow will be the equivalent of building a deck of cards on a pile of sand.

James Heckman, 2000 Nobel Laureate, predicts a grim economic future for the United States at the twilight of the industrial age unless America keeps up with the global educational surge.

In his paper, *The Productivity Argument for Investing in Young Children*, Heckman and his co-author, Dimitriy Masterov, state: "Over 20 percent of U.S. workers are functionally illiterate and innumerate, a much higher percentage than leading European countries." On productivity grounds, they continue, "it makes sound business sense to invest in young children, especially from disadvantaged environments."

Their paper shows that children who participate in high-quality preschool programs "experienced increased achievement test scores and high school graduation and decreased grade retention, time in special education, experience with crime and delinquency."

This is data not from a "bleeding heart child advocate," but a Nobel Prize-winning economist.

This is data that you can take to the bank.

There is an extremely strong business and economic case to be made for investing in our youngest citizens, which will pay off for all.

Let's begin to build a strong foundation for our children, our families, our communities and our nation by investing more in high-quality preschool education. As the old oil commercial used to conclude: "You can pay me now, or you can pay me later."

Tom Watkins is a business and education consultant. He served as Michigan's superintendent of schools from 2001-05 and CEO of the Economic Council of Palm Beach County, Fla., 1996-2001. Read his report "The New Education (R)evolution" at [www.nacol.org](http://www.nacol.org). He can be reached at [tdwatkins@aol.com](mailto:tdwatkins@aol.com).

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SHOWROOM, INC.

Featuring:

HOME CREST  
CABINETRY

WILSONART  
INTERNATIONAL

GIBRALTER

KOHLER

FORMICA

DuPont  
CORIAN

DELTA

and many more!

# Family HEATING, COOLING & ELECTRICAL

Family Owned & Operated for Over 30 Years

**The Only Name You Need to Know for All Your Heating, Air Conditioning and Electrical Needs**

*We pledge to treat you like family:*

- We will NOT sell you something you don't need or want!
- We WILL provide prompt, quality, professional workmanship at a fair price!

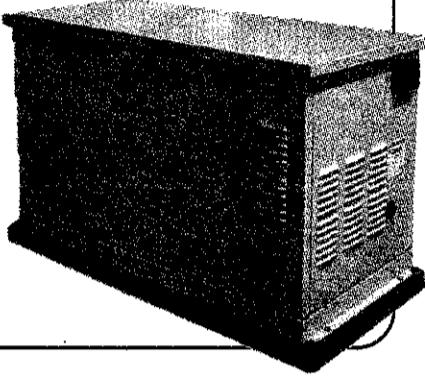
## GAS GENERATORS

*Specializing in...*

**Whole House, Fully Automatic,  
Stand By, Natural Gas Powered**

**Finally Affordable  
FOR THE AVERAGE HOME!**

**Low Rate Financing Available or  
6 Months Same As Cash with  
Approved Credit**



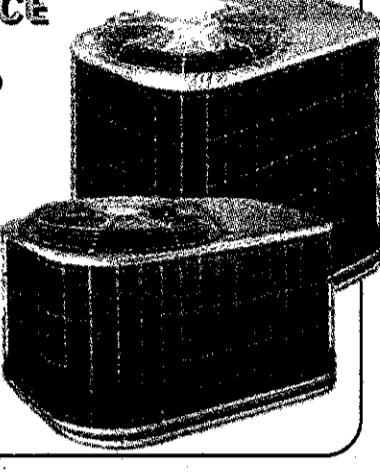
## AIR CONDITIONING

*Specialists*

**We Sell - Install - Service  
& Repair ALL Brands  
& ALL Models**

**10 SEER Central Air Conditioners  
Available While They Last!**

**These are premium brand name  
units with a 15-20 year service life!  
(not builder's models with short life expectancy)**



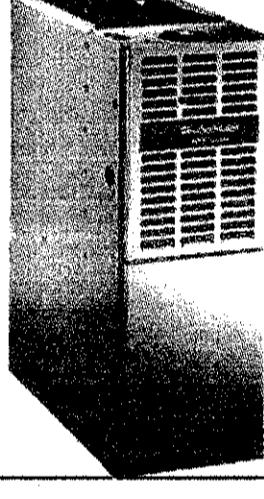
## ELECTRICAL WORK

**Trouble Shooting & Service Performed  
by Full Service Master Electricians**

- Service Changes & Upgrades • Rewiring
- Outlets Added • Ground Fault Interrupt Outlets
- Edison's Low Rate Meter • Breakers Installed
- Installation of Ceiling Fans, Light Fixtures, Stove Hoods • Violations Corrected
- Wiring of Furnaces, Air Conditioning, Hot Tubs, Hot Water Heaters & Appliances

## HEATING-FURNACE

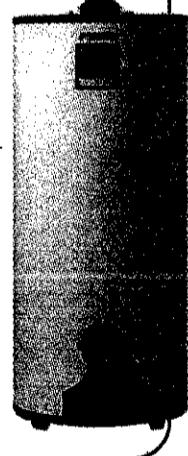
**We Sell - Install  
Service & Repair  
All Brands & All Models**



- Cleaning & Inspections
- Sheet Metal & Duct Fabrication & Installation
- Air Cleaners
- Humidifiers

*Did You Know We Install  
**WATER HEATERS?***

**INSTALLED WITH THE SAME QUALITY  
PRODUCTS, DEPENDABLE, FAST SERVICE  
& REASONABLE PRICES YOU HAVE COME  
TO TRUST & EXPECT FROM US.**



**Same Day  
Emergency Service or  
Installations. All Brands.**

## SALES, SERVICE, PARTS & INSTALLATION

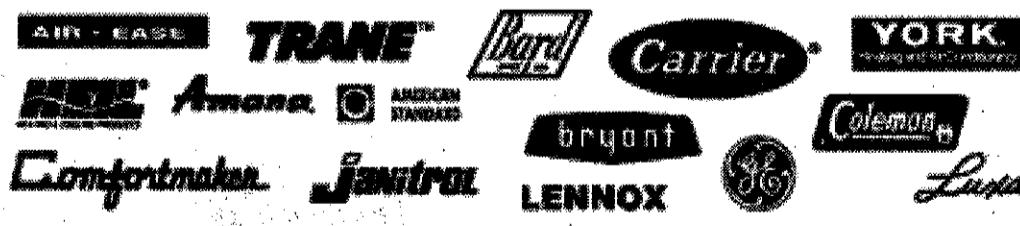
**RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL**

**70 TRUCKS FOR  
FAST SERVICE!**



**LOW RATE FINANCING  
AVAILABLE  
also  
6 MONTHS SAME AS CASH  
ON MANY BRANDS  
*Both are with approved credit***

**FREE  
ESTIMATES!  
Licensed & Insured  
Michigan State License  
#71-01599**



**We carry most premium name brand equipment so that we can meet your needs and we will NOT try to sell you any 1 particular manufacturer's brand.**

**Endorsed by  
JOE GAGNON**

**"The Appliance Doctor"**

- Radio Talk Show Host
- Consumer Advocate
- Fraud Investigator

**734-422-8080**

**GARDEN CITY  
30210 Ford Road  
Showroom and Parts**

**248-548-9565  
MADISON HEIGHTS  
26324 John R.  
Showroom and Parts**

