

## "Cash in a flash" for inventive ESP winners

County Executive Brooks Patterson was busy during the afternoon of May 27 handing out \$50 checks to seven employees who cleared a major hurdle on their way to being in line for one of the big prizes awarded in the Employee Suggestion Program at the end of the year.

During the Managers meeting held in the kiva at Oakland Schools, **Mary Pardee**, Personnel Department, received her award for suggesting design changes in the activities calendar which will make it easier to read for residents of the Medical Care Facility.

**Ryan Runnels**, Equalization, was awarded his mini-windfall for suggesting that WordPerfect templates be created and merged with Equalization mainframe records to produce a more professional looking real-property tax statement.



Whose smiling face is missing in this picture of happy interim \$50 winners in the Employee Suggestion Program? Could it be yours?

Another winner, **Kathleen Christ**, Community Corrections, is \$50 richer for her idea to letter or number the parking lots at Oakland Pointe, so visitors can find their cars easier.

**Madelyn Thomas** and **Elaine VanDyke**, Drain Commissioner's Office, teamed up on a suggestion that the Public

Works Building include the postal address which is printed on the Drain Office stationery in order to better assist the public.

**Doug Nichols** and **Joe Buese**, Community Mental Health, collaborated on an idea which could generate an additional \$500,000 in revenue annually for the county. They suggested that CMH contract with an outside agency to improve the collection effort of clients who are eligible for Medicaid reimbursements.

So far this year, 78 suggestions have been submitted to ESP with eight of those being implemented. In order to qualify for one of the trips or large cash prizes which are awarded at the employees' holiday party, suggestions must be submitted and implemented by Friday, Oct. 31. To date, the Employee Suggestion Program has saved Oakland County taxpayers nearly \$3 million.

## Employees "walk-the-walk" for healthy babies

Mother Nature smiled gently on the 27th Annual March of Dimes WalkAmerica with clear skies and mild temperatures as more than 300 Oakland County government employees laced up their tennis shoes and challenged the course at the Auburn Hills campus of Oakland Community College.

A couple of things were different though this time around. The walk was held on Saturday instead of Sunday and the course was shorter, covering eight miles instead 12 miles.

"We had the weather with us, which made it really nice," said **Shirla Kugler**, administrator of the Medical Care Facility, who along with **Cindy Davis**, assistant administrator, served as cochair of this year's event.

Although the final numbers aren't in yet from the April 26 walk, it appears Oakland County had 310 walkers and raised more than \$34,000 in the ongoing crusade to prevent birth defects and infant mortality. Since 1993, the county team has fielded more than 2,200 walkers who

have raised in excess of \$200,000 for March of Dimes research, community services, education, and advocacy.

"I was very pleased with the turnout this year," Kugler said. "It was a beautiful day for walking and everyone had a lot of fun."

According to March of Dimes officials, the nearly 1,000 walkers who showed up at the Auburn Hills site this year were responsible for raising \$100,000 in the fight for healthier babies.

## PATTERSON/ *Person to Person*

**S**ometime around 1990, **Art Halsey** and **Doug Williams** of the Treasurer's Office (Doug's now a Deputy County Executive) teamed up with the Payroll Division and Management and Budget to implement a Direct Deposit plan for Oakland County government. Since those early days, the number of employees participating in Direct Deposit has steadily increased. Currently, 53 percent of all Oakland County employees have their paychecks automatically deposited in the account of their choice. That's a marked improvement over the 44 percent of the employees who were in the program when I became County Executive in 1993. But we can do better.

The benefits of Direct Deposit cut two ways, both for you as an employee and for us as an employer. On the one hand, Direct Deposit reduces the stress and strain on the county of getting paychecks into the hands of those employees who work all over the county. For instance,

the Health Division has employees working in the south end and west Oakland, which means checks have to be placed in separate envelopes and physically delivered to those satellite locations. It's a time consuming and very inefficient process, especially when multiplied by the other divisions and departments of county government which require similar service.

But on the other hand, you as an employee derive benefits from Direct Deposit. For one thing, with Direct Deposit you don't have to worry about your check getting lost. You always know the money will be there. In addition, you are not inconvenienced by being forced to stand in long lines at the Credit Union or bank on payday Fridays. If you are on vacation when payday rolls around, no problem—the money will be there, ready for you to access it whenever you need it. One other advantage is that most financial institutions offer customers with Direct Deposit free checking.

A lot of businesses today make Direct



**L. Brooks Patterson**  
Oakland County Executive

Deposit mandatory, but of course, we can't and won't do that. All I ask is that if you are not already participating in Direct Deposit, please seriously consider doing so in the not too distant future. It's a good deal for you and it's a good deal for us. It doesn't get any better than that.

## County employees come to aid of co-worker

**F**or **Tom Woodard**, chief of Contract Services for Community Mental Health, it started out as a typical day. He got up in the morning, went to work and on the way home stopped off at Kroger's to pick up some things. But as he pulled into the store's parking lot, his mobile phone rang. It was his wife on the other end telling him he'd better come home, because there had been a fire in the garage. Everybody was all right, she said, and the fire department had arrived. She wisely didn't go into more detail.

As Woodard pulled down his street, he knew the situation was a lot worse than he had anticipated. There were four or five fire engines, ambulances and other emergency vehicles lining the street. The fire, which started in the garage, had spread quickly, engulfing the entire first

floor of the home. In its destructive path, the flames had claimed the lives of three of Woodard's pets, two dogs and a cat. Only his yellow Labrador Retriever, which was outside at the time, was spared.

The fire, which caused an estimated \$325,000 worth of damage, will force Woodard and his family to live in a motor home during the five or six months it will take to rebuild the home on Lake Oakland. Woodard is shooting for a Thanksgiving completion date, but he thinks it will probably be Christmas time before they can actually move back in.

Even in life's darkest tragedies, there is sometimes a beacon of light which sends out rays of hope. Following the May 15 fire, one of Woodard's coworkers, **Patricia Marble**, established a "Tom Woodard Disaster Fund," which was de-

signed to help the family get back on its feet again. County workers from many different departments reached deep into their hearts and wallets to help out their coworker. Eventually, the fund grew to more than \$1,500 and recently Woodard, much to his surprise, was presented with a check in that amount. Woodard says he and his family are still discussing what to do with the money. One possibility, he says, is to establish a special fund for other fire victims. Woodard says insurance is covering much of his loss, but others aren't always so lucky.

"What the employees of Oakland County have done for me and my family is simply unbelievable," Woodard said. "I'd like to express to everyone, my family's heartfelt thanks and appreciation for their generosity."

# Our most important assets

Every year, Oakland County acknowledges the importance of children and their development through life. The promotion of self-esteem and good working habits in children extends beyond the house and involves the entire community.

That's why Oakland County government employees joined the nation on Thursday, April 24 in celebrating "Bring Your Child to Work Day." Many employees participated in the event including **Jack and Tricia Smith** who brought daughter, Whitney, age six. This was the second year her parents brought her to work and she loves to see what mom and dad do all day. She spent part of her time in the Print Shop with Dad and the remainder in Emergency Management with Mom, where she made photocopies and helped with the mailings.

The opportunity for children to participate in the event not only provides them with a chance to learn about a real work environment, but also helps to build loving bonds between them and their parents. Oakland County is proud of the large number of employees participating this year and is pleased to be a part of this nationally recognized day.



Whitney Smith puts in some time at the office.

## Did you know?

*According to the Child Welfare League of America:*

- Every day in the US, at least three children die as a result of abuse or neglect.
- Marijuana use among 12- to 17-year-olds nearly doubled from 4% in 1992 to 7.3% in 1994.
- Children comprise 11.4% of all medically uninsured persons under age 65.
- In 1980, children were murdered at a rate of five per day; in 1994 the rate was seven per day.

## The TELEGRAPH

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## Patience is a virtue...

Since August 1996, the Road Commission for Oakland County has been involved in a \$1.2-million, multi-phase construction project on the roads of the county's Pontiac Service Center. The project will improve the safety and accessibility of the center.

With all of the dust, dirt and dump trucks, employees and over 4,000 visitors, have been forced to deal with frustrating delays. But don't fret too much; the end is in sight.

The last stage, which began in April, involves redesigning the south entrance where traffic jams have caused some safety concerns. Installation of a traffic light, as well as a loop around the exit to Pontiac Lake Road, has turned jams into easy flowing traffic. The entrance off Telegraph Road going north was closed so it could be widened to a two-lane road, making travel even more pleasant.

Another concern facing many travelers is the lack of adequate lighting in the parking lots. Both the north and south side will have eleven new light poles. According to

**Paul Hunter**, manager of Facilities Engineering, "The current light fixtures will have to be replaced because they are not bright enough for a parking lot; they are more for pedestrian sidewalks."

Updating signs has also been an ongoing process. The visitor information center just received an enlarged sign, containing a colored map, along with updated traveler maps providing convenience and assurance to those who may feel lost.

Yearly repairs are a must in order to maintain safety and accessibility. The Capital Improvement Program contains various proposals which the Board of Commissioners evaluates and then prioritizes according to importance and available funding.

There you have it— more lights with better visibility, fewer holes and cracked roads, easier accessibility to buildings and convenient signs to locate your preferred destination.

It may be a bit frustrating dodging all the trucks and muck, but the outcome will be worth the wait.

# Technology explosion hits Oakland County

By Jennifer Delle-Monache, Media & Communications

**O**n May 10, most of Oakland County's area code was changed to 248. Trying to keep track of everyone's phone numbers, business cards, fax machines, pagers, cell phones and Internet addresses can really load you down. You would think that with all of this technology business would be easier. But is it?

The fact is technology does make a difference in business transactions. However, the rapid growth of cellular phones, second lines, etc. has exhausted the available numbers in many area codes forcing area code splits. Area code 810 was set up to assist 313 in the hope that both would be depleted at the same time. In 1993, area code 810 was introduced and was expected to last until the year 2000. Since 1994-95, there has been a 91 percent increase in the number of telephone exchanges. In addition, more than 33 percent of the national work force had home offices in comparison to ten percent in 1990, which caused area code 810 to become depleted a lot quicker.

According to Ameritech, area codes are designed to grow equally and last the same amount of time. Area Code Admin-

istrators hope 248 and 810 will grow together. Each area code has more than seven hundred exchanges. All area codes hold the same amount of numbers.

According to Cellnet Cellular, employees at Oakland County will have to reprogram their county cellular phones with new numbers and should do so by Saturday, Sept. 13 when the 248 area code will be in full swing.

Aside from telephones and other electronic tools; all stationery, business cards, printed labels and envelopes will have to be changed. According to **J. David Vanderveen**, director of Central Services, "One way Oakland County employees can handle the hassle is to order in bulk." This will not only decrease the amount of paper work, but it will also save the county about four thousand dollars.

Patience and cooperation are the keys. We all wanted life in the fast lane to be easier, right? Well, there is a price to pay for communication in an age where technology is exploding.

If you haven't already changed your cellular phone number, please visit one of the locations listed to the right.

## Bloomfield Hills

4114 W. Maple Road  
(north side of Maple, west of Telegraph)  
Phone: (248) 932-9700  
Contact: Karyn McKeown  
Mike Matthews  
Shannon Morgan

## Birmingham

1532 S. Woodward Avenue  
(west side of Woodward, south of Maple)  
Phone: (248) 645-8181  
Contact: Keith Gorecki

## Madison Heights

31075 John R  
(west side of John R, north of 13 Mile)  
Phone: (248) 585-4520  
Contact: Gasper Orlando, ext 277  
Steve Gaul, ext. 267

## Farmington Hills

32875 Northwestern Hwy.  
(south of 14 Mile, on the west side)  
Phone: (248) 626-8480  
Contact: Stephanie Rockman  
Karen Drake  
Paul Tomezak

**HOURS:** Monday through Friday,  
8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Satur-  
day, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.



**OAKLAND COUNTY EXECUTIVE DECLARES APRIL AS MONTH OF THE YOUNG CHILD.** Mr. Patterson is shown presenting a proclamation to members of the Children's Summit of Oakland County steering committee. Pictured left to right are: **Marti Loftus**, consultant to Children's Summit; **Shelley Taub**, Oakland County Commissioner; **Donna Lackie**, Oakland Family Services and **Judy Hoeffler**, Executive Director of the Child Abuse and Neglect Council.

## 1997 TOTALS TICKER

CASUAL DAY FUND \$ 17,138

ESP SUGGESTIONS 113

DIRECT DEPOSIT 52 %

## The View from Here

Occasionally, life throws a little dose of reality in your path. Such was the case a few weeks ago when I received a call from my brother who lives in Arizona. He told me our mother had been to the doctor and had been diagnosed with breast cancer. The remedy: a mastectomy.

Mom got on the phone and said she had suspected something was wrong almost a year ago. But being the procrastinator she is, she put off seeing a doctor until the lump became too large to ignore.

Naturally, she was scared as are most people when they learn they have the "Big C." You start thinking that the end is near.

She went in for surgery on a Tuesday and was home by Thursday night. My wife and I flew out to Arizona on Friday morning to be with her and to give my brother a much needed break.

Frankly, I didn't know what to expect when I got there. I had this picture of mom lying in bed, weak and emaciated. Nothing could have been further from the

truth. When we arrived, she was waiting at the door to greet us—all smiles and in an upbeat, positive mood.

What a relief! Here was a 76-year-old woman who had just undergone major surgery a couple of days before, yet she was moving about her apartment as if nothing had happened.

At this stage of the game, her prognosis is good. She doesn't even need chemotherapy, just some medication to take care of a couple of potentially troublesome lymph nodes in her neck.

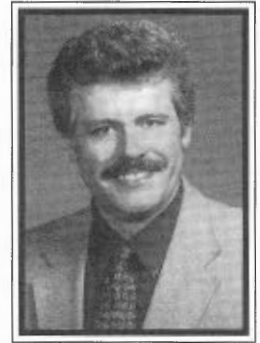
The experience brings home several points. First: cancer treatment has come a long way in the past decade. Second: getting cancer isn't an automatic death sentence. Third: Like most "Baby Boomers," who have aging parents, I will now have to begin thinking of what kind of care my mother will need in the years ahead.

Fortunately, mom is still mentally and physically able to take care of herself, but what about next year or the year after? If and when she is no longer able to live by

herself and care for herself, other options will have to be considered. Will it be a nursing home, assisted living, or should my wife and I bring her back to Michigan to live with us?

It's not something I want to think about, but like my peers in the 50-plus age group, this is a reality of life many of us will have to face in the not too distant future.

The trick is deciding what's in the best interest of all concerned. Someday my son may have to make a similar decision regarding my care. I only hope that when that time comes, he will have the wisdom and courage to do what needs to be done, not only for my sake, but for his as well.



**Bob Dustman**  
Media and  
Communications  
Officer

## Viv at the Movies

by Mary Viviano, Friend of the Court



### “Chasing Amy”

After giving my mother her Opium perfume and eating a piece of cake with her on Mother's Day, I headed to the movies to see "Chasing Amy." Unfortunately, mom went off to work and missed an excellent film. I know she would have enjoyed it as much as I did.

"Chasing Amy" is a story about two lifelong pals from New Jersey who produce a hit comic book called "Bluntman and Chronic." Holden McNeil, played by Ben Affleck and Banky Edwards, portrayed by Jason Lee, are leading the typical "boys will be boys" life, until Holden

falls hard for fellow cartoonist, Alyssa Jones, played by Joey Lauren Adams. One problem, Alyssa is a self proclaimed lesbian. Undeterred, Holden and Alyssa develop a friendship that ultimately leads to an intimate relationship much to Banky's distress and great disapproval. He is not ready for the rules to change in his ten-year friendship with Holden.

Writer-director Kevin Smith has crafted an outstanding script. The movie is dialogue driven and the characters are very well developed. The most hilarious scenes focus on a conversation between Banky and Alyssa comparing "scars," a discussion about homosexuality in Archie Andrew's comic book and a speech about

racism in "Star Wars." The most compelling moments which truly define the film are played between Affleck and Adams. Both put in wonderful performances, especially Adams. The conversations and confrontations between their characters teach the audience about searching for love, accepting the responsibilities of relationships and giving up all your fears and insecurities to completely trust in your heart.

Combining these emotions with Banky's jealousy and personal conflicts, a true picture of modern love and friendship in the 90s is brilliantly created. Do not pass up on the opportunity to discover who is "Chasing Amy."

# Oakland County Partners for Prevention

by Betty Conger,  
Waterford SAFE Prevention specialist

**W**aterford SAFE Center for Parent Education, Michigan State University Extension 4H Youth Programs, and Oakland County Health Division/Office of Substance Abuse are partnering to offer the "Talking With Your Kids About Alcohol" (TWYKAA) series beginning in September. The Waterford SAFE staff is eager to jointly offer the series and hope that Oakland County employees will take advantage of this opportunity for free parenting education to prevent alcohol abuse. Although the program was designed for parents, it is useful for all adults.

Today, when alcohol related incidents are claiming more young lives than any other cause, "Do as I say and not as I do!"

just isn't good enough. To prevent alcohol abuse the entire community must present a consistent message and clear expectations about alcohol abuse which is often a factor in many community issues (crime, car crashes, and family problems). "Talking With Your Kids About Alcohol," a nationally recognized research based prevention program, provides parents and other adults with just the right information, skills, and perspective to give children and adults an accurate view of alcohol abuse.

Research into successful prevention strategies shows that parents and other adults are an important influence on a young person's decision not to use alcohol and other drugs. Parents and other adults make a difference in the lives of children, if they choose to use their influence in a healthy, safe manner. Although

the TWYKAA series focuses on alcohol prevention, the skills are applicable to many other important issues facing our children today.

The fall TWYKAA series will be held on Tuesdays, Sept. 23 and 30 and Oct. 7 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in the West Wing of the Courthouse. Attendance at the first class is essential for participation at the following sessions. Refreshments will be available from 5 to 5:30 p.m. From 8 to 8:30 p.m., community representatives will provide resource information. To register or for more information, call **Julie Scislowicz** at the Oakland County Extension 4H office at (248) 858-1018. The series is also offered at other locations in Oakland County on a regular basis. Federal and state monies are utilized to help with program costs.

## Oakland County poet receives award

**E**mrol Nembhard, Central Garage, entered this poem, entitled "Ordained," in the National Library of Poetry Contest. Thousands entered and Emrol was among the seventy chosen to be published in "A Lasting Mirage," which will hit print this October. Oakland County wishes to congratulate Emrol on his accomplishment!

### Ordained

*I've had only three lawful marriages  
The first two were painful miscarriages.  
The third to this sweet all-American.  
Twelve years later she's the sweetest all-Jamerican.  
Her smile will get you; her voice a sweet sound  
No way to escape her charm when around.  
We enjoy our big house, its command and presence  
It speaks of our lifestyle and captures its essence.  
We enjoy our jobs with Oakland County  
Very thankful for all our blessings and bounty.  
With two rental properties and big older cars  
We feel and live like royalty and stars.  
We never quarreled, fussed or complained  
Fully convinced our blessings were ordained.*

### From the Archives...

**W**hile leafing through some old copies of *The Gazette*, which was *The Telegraph's* predecessor, a few familiar names jumped out.

An article in the March 1965 *Gazette* mentioned the current director of Facilities Management under the heading "ENGINEERING NEWS": "Dave Ross had the misfortune of breaking a finger recently while lifting a manhole cover. Dave had some good news during the month too, he and his wife are expecting their first child in October."

In the February 1965 edition of *The Gazette*, under the heading "MEET NEW PERSONNEL STAFF," was this little blurb about one of the newest members of the Personnel Division: "Vince Luzi— formerly of Western Michigan University and a teacher in the Clarkston School system. Of course, Vince retired in January as Personnel director, after more than 30 years with county government.

Finally, in the November-December 1964 edition of *The Gazette*, under "CHILDREN'S CENTER NEWS," was this item about the current manager of Children's Village: "Micheale Worrell, former student supervisor, has joined the staff on the Children's Center Boys' Side."

We salute these fine individuals and others like them who have devoted their entire working careers to making county government the national role model for excellence that it has become.

# Former Red Wing star skates into auction

This year's annual Oakland County Spring Auction offered a little more than the usual bill of fare. Of course there were the normal items on display; things like cars, trucks, jewelry, stereo equipment, computers, and the like. But an unexpected added attraction was an appearance by former Detroit Red Wing great Mickey Redmond.

Redmond, who is now a hockey broadcaster for ESPN and FOX, called his good buddy **Mike Zehnder**, director of Public Services, to ask if he wanted to go to the

auction. Zehnder reluctantly agreed, even though he had some workmen coming that Saturday morning to do some landscaping at his home.

When Redmond walked into the County Garage much of the attention shifted to him and away from the merchandise. Redmond, who played right wing for the Wings, signed about 100 autographs and also found time to purchase a mountain bike, a lawn mower, and about five computer printers.

Afterwards, Redmond drove to Detroit to prepare for the Wings/Flyers game on ESPN II that evening. That didn't stop him from making a return visit to the auction in the afternoon.

Later that evening, Redmond's face and voice were transmitted to some 178 countries around the world on ESPN II as he and co-broadcaster Dave Strader described the action as the Detroit Red Wings won their first Stanley Cup Championship in 41 years.



**BATTLE OF THE BULGE.** Robert Daddow (left), director of Management & Budget, parts with a \$100 bill as he pays off on a weight loss wager made with Corporation Counsel Gerald Poisson. During their contest, which ran from Jan. 6 through Memorial Day, Poisson lost 75 pounds to Daddow's 55 pounds.

## OCRA officers begin new terms

The Oakland County Retirees Association held their annual Business Meeting/Luncheon on May 21 at the Elks Lodge in Waterford.

President **Evelyn Clelland** discussed a number of issues at the meeting including the need for more office volunteers and the organization's commitment to continue to work for a retiree pay adjustment. Another of OCRA's goals for the year is to fulfill the mandate of their by-laws to provide seminars and special speakers for educational purposes. This goal is also an IRS requirement because of OCRA's newly acquired non-profit status.

Additionally, the group was honored to have **Judge Donald Adams** swear in the following officers for the 1997/98 term: President **Clelland**; Vice President **Tom Jackson**; Treasurer **Ron Polley**; Assistant Treasurer **Jane C. Chunovich**; Secretary **Ann Devers**; Assistant Secretary **Betty Ockerman** and Trustee **Dorothy Hemingway**. **Charles Lewis** and **Gerald Miley** are continuing their three-year trustee terms.

The renowned OCRA singing group became "6 Plus 1" with the addition of new member **Don Denoyer** as they performed a few tunes for the 93 members and guests who enjoyed the day's activities.

## Circuit Court awarded domestic violence grant

The Oakland County Circuit Court's Task Force on Domestic Violence has been awarded a \$6,000 grant by the Detroit Edison Foundation, which will be used to pay the printing costs for an informational booklet on domestic violence.

The free informational booklet, entitled "You Are Not Alone," was written and published under the direction and leadership of **Chief Judge Edward Sosnick**. The booklet is designed to increase the public's awareness and sensitivity to the problems associated with domestic vio-

lence. One of the key messages contained in the booklet is that help is available for victims of domestic violence.

Each year in the United States, domestic violence is the leading cause of injury for women ages 15 to 44 years. The Oakland County Prosecutor's Office estimates that more than 13,250 Oakland County families are touched by some form of domestic violence. While these statistics are alarming in themselves, the Department of Justice suggests that a tremendous number of abusive incidents are either hidden from public view or go unreported.

Cooperative efforts of organizations such as the Detroit Edison Foundation, combined with leadership like that demonstrated by Chief Judge Sosnick in creating the Oakland County Task Force, make it possible to enhance awareness on the causes and dynamics of domestic violence and help those in crisis situations locate and seek community resources. The generosity of the Detroit Edison Foundation in awarding this grant to the Circuit Court will allow the Oakland County Task Force to continue this all important mission.

# Art program brings ray of sunshine to court

**O**n May 8, the Office of Arts, Culture and Film hosted the **Art in the Court** project reception in the Oakland County Galleria. Celebrating the project's success were 200 artists, sponsors, donors and friends who gathered to acknowledge individual artists for their contributions to the community.

The project began May 6 and ran through the month. Selected works from the exhibition were purchased for the permanent collection at the Oakland County Probate Court. The event was created to acquire art that would humanize and aesthetically enhance the environ-

ment of Probate Court. This includes the estate section where citizens take care of wills, estates and guardianships, as well as the juvenile section where families in crisis deal with such matters as juvenile delinquency, foster care and adoption. By integrating creative artwork, the court hopes to decrease anxiety and hostility and project a positive, caring atmosphere for citizens and workers.

Art in the Court has been made possible by the generous financial support of donors, both corporate and individual, without the use of taxpayer money. The idea and execution for Art in the Court has been a partnership between the Oak-

land County Citizens Alliance, Oakland County Office of Arts, Culture and Film and Oakland County Probate Court.

"It was a great example of a partnership with the Executive Office. Maybe it is a precursor of things to come," said Resource and Program Specialist **Dick Thibodeau**. "Art in the Court exemplifies the collaborative and community based aims of the Office of Arts, Culture and Film," said **Steve Weikal**, director.

Special Thanks to our distinguished juror, Gerhardt Knodel, director of Cranbrook Academy of Art, whose love for art has graced those who have seen his work both nationally and internationally.

# Students get up close look at Oakland County

**O**akland County government rolled out the welcome mat on Monday, May 5 for 65 ninth through twelfth-grade students who attend Pontiac Central, Pontiac Northern, and Oakland Christian High Schools. The students, who were participants in the Youth in Government Day program organized by Pastor Douglas Jones of the Welcome Baptist Church in Pontiac, spent several hours visiting Circuit Court, Probate Court, the Prosecutor's Office, and the County Executive's Office.

"The students couldn't stop talking about what a great time they had," Pastor Jones said. "They especially enjoyed the time spent with Mr. Patterson."

During their visit to the Executive Office Building, students were taken on a tour of the "One-Stop-Shop," witnessed a demonstration of the county's new videoconferencing capability and were shown a process called photo imaging, which uses computer enhancements to demonstrate how a piece of property will look after it has undergone physical improvements.

In addition to Mr. Patterson, **Judy Eaton**, director of Personnel; **John Mahoney**, director of Information Technology; **Gerald Poisson**, Corporation Counsel; **Dave Ross**, director of Facilities Management; **J. David VanderVeen**, director of Central Services, and **Rick**

**Williams**, director of Community and Minority Affairs, also participated in the program by spending time with the students and explaining to them how their individual departments function.

"I think this type of experience is valuable for young people, because it gives them some sense of how county government impacts their lives," Mr. Patterson said. "Perhaps some of these young men and women will have been inspired enough to want to pursue a career in public service."

Pastor Jones indicated he would like to expand the Youth in Government Day program next year to include additional schools and more county departments.

# Court employee honored by Gov. Engler

**D**ick Thibodeau, resource specialist for Probate Court, journeyed to Lansing recently to be recognized as one of the finalists for the Fourth Annual Governor's Community Service Awards. Thibodeau, who has been employed by Oakland County government for 25 years, attended a private reception at the residence of Governor and Mrs. John Engler and then received

a plaque during a dinner held at the Lansing Center later that evening.

Thibodeau was honored for his outstanding work in developing the "Oakland County Directory of Human Resources, 1997-98." This is the seventh edition of the directory and Thibodeau has been involved in its production from the very beginning. The directory, which

has become the Bible of human resources for Oakland County, contains 26 appendixes that cover specialized services including transportation, cultural services, and chambers of commerce.

Noting that Mother Waddles was also one of the honorees, Thibodeau said, "I was just honored to be in that kind of company."



# Spotlight on Community & Minority Affairs director

by Jennifer Delle-Monache,  
Media & Communications

**T**he phrase, "Dare To Dream" is not only something **Richard "Rick" Williams** has lived by, it's also an organization he created, which was in operation from 1986 to 1994. The purpose of the program was to empower individuals by encouraging them to achieve their greatest potential in life. This has been Rick's mission statement and he is now sharing it with us as Oakland County's director of Community and Minority Affairs.

Rick jumped on board back in November 1995 after moving here from Wisconsin. He succeeded **Rebecca Holowicki**, who Rick said laid a strong foundation from which he has been able to expand the scope of his department.

Rick, who was born on the west side of Chicago, comes from a family of seven. He experienced, firsthand, life in the 60s during the national cry for political power. Rick says his strength came from his parents' values and from meeting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "In order for me to be empowered; to leave my scratch on the earth, I need to make a commitment to learn about things I know nothing about," said Rick. So of the seven children, Rick was the only one to graduate,

earning an economics degree from Knox College in Galesburg, Ill. He went on to Northern Illinois University and received

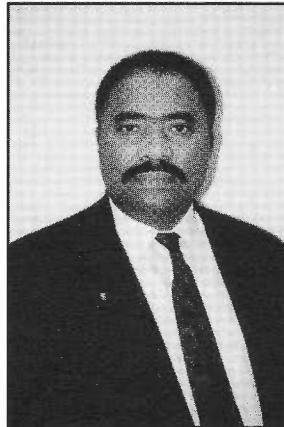
his master's degree in business. His philosophy on education has set an example for the communities he has worked with as well as his children, who know college is just as important as elementary school.

Rick has a wide range of experience within the public and private sectors. In Wisconsin, Rick owned several small businesses, including an 18,000-square-foot market where he trained 100 employees, and one of

the last fresh-baked gourmet Famous Amos Cookie studios at Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee for seven years. Rick also became involved in the Urban League as director of employment and economic development. In the public sector, Rick has worked on several government committees, including one established by Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson who called upon Rick's business skills to assist them in arranging for state agencies to provide job services, vo-

ational rehabilitation services, housing support and economic development.

Since Rick's arrival, he has been very proactive in undertaking a variety of challenging projects. One in particular was the joint effort between the City of Pontiac and Oakland County to work together to improve the communication system in Pontiac for the police and fire departments. Also, the Community Reinvestment Act is an initiative involving local banks, who donate funds in collaboration with the county to improve the lives of low to moderate-income families. Some 272,000 people in the county are living near the poverty



**Rick Williams**  
Director of Community & Minority Affairs

level and a strong working relationship between the banks and Oakland County has made possible the dream of home ownership for many people.

Rick lives in Clarkston with his wife Deborah and their four children. When Rick is not in the office, he enjoys being a pastor at Lu Mont Baptist Church and volunteering his time with local charitable organizations such as Habitat for Humanity. He also loves to travel with the family to Flint to dance in family performances.

## State Bar honors judge & former court employee

**A** highly respected Oakland County jurist and a former deputy Circuit Court administrator have been named recipients of the 1997 Clarity Awards, which have been presented annually for the past five years by the State Bar of Michigan to promote the use of plain English in legal writing.

**Circuit Judge Gene Schnelz** and former Court Administrator **Margaret Garvin-Blanchard**, who currently serves as administrator/magistrate of the 45B District Court in Oak Park, are being hon-

ored for a "plain English" guilty-plea form which they developed in 1995 for use in the Circuit Court. The form appeared in the March 1997 issue of the *Michigan Bar Journal*, which noted that Michigan judges are at the forefront of an effort to promote the use of plain English by practicing it in their own legal writings.

Judge Schnelz has received numerous awards and honors during his 18-year tenure on the Circuit Court bench. In 1996, he received the Oakland County

Republican's John N. O'Brien Memorial Award for Distinguished Community Service, and in 1994 he was awarded the State Bar of Michigan's highest honor, the Robert P. Hudsons Award for Service to the Public and Legal Profession.

Judge Schnelz' other award honors include the Frances R. Avadenka Award, the First Jewish Association for Retarded Citizen's Civil Rights Award, the NAACP Presidential Award for Judicial Service, and the Alma College Distinguished Alumni Award.

## Birmingham offers Little League



Have a fun game of baseball each Tuesday & Thursday evening, starting, July 15.

On game days, simply be at Eton Field No. 2 at 6:30 p.m. to participate.

Any 10 to 12-year-old who played Little League this year may play this summer, free of charge. You can still play summer ball if you did not play little league this past spring, but you must register with a parent.

Bring your cap, glove, and smile to each game. Bats, batting helmets and catchers equipment will be provided (Catchers MUST wear a protective cup).

Games will be umpired. Parents, friends, and family are invited to stay, picnic, watch the game and enjoy the evening. The last summer game is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 7.

For further information contact **David Van de Griff**, (248) 645-2568.

See you at the game!

## Help Us!

The Health Division's Lab and X-ray units are located in the Medical Care Facility, 32 East. Please refer clients asking for these units to this facility and **NOT** to the other Health Division facilities. Thank you for your consideration.

## Disney offers employee discounts

Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom Club is offering ten percent discounts to all Oakland County employees. The discounts can be used at Disney stores and Disney theme parks in Florida and California, including hotel accommodations. To receive your Disney Magic Kingdom Club Membership Card and packet of information, contact **Kim Soncrainte** at (248) 858-4636.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Oakland County Youth Assistance needs men and women of character to volunteer as mentors for children at risk. You are not being asked to be a parent or a counselor—just a good friend who can spend a couple of hours a week with a youngster who might be heading down the wrong path. This is a chance to make a difference in your community. For more information, please call (248) 858-0041.

**WE NEED YOU!**

## Casual Day Update!

On Monday, June 23, Oakland County employees donated \$1,729 for the United Cerebral Palsy Casual Day fund drive.

## The Oakland County Galleria

*Located in the Executive Office Building.*

**"Exotics: Botanicals By Michigan Artists"**

*An all-state, all-media competition featuring works of botanical subject matter showing through the end of July.*

## COMING & GOING

### NEW EMPLOYEES

**Ryan Anderson**, Arts, Culture & Film, began in June as an intern from Oakland University.

**Dean Dibasio**, Information Technology Systems Development and Support Division, was hired on June 4 as a supervisor.

**Daryl Dunham**, Information Technology Data Center Operations Division, was hired into a fulltime position on May 14 as a general helper/delivery person.

**David Dunn**, Drain Commissioner's Operations & Maintenance Electronics Division, was hired on Feb. 10 as an electronics technician.

**Ted Gibson**, Community Corrections Division, joined the Pretrial Services on May 5 as an investigator.

**Larry Gruber**, Information Technology Data Center Operations Division, was hired on April 24 as a general helper/delivery person.

**Sheryl Mitchell**, Board of Commissioners, was hired on May 27 as an administrative analyst.

**Geraldine Myers**, Drain Commissioner's Soil Erosion Division, was hired on March 24 as general clerical.

**Kelley Parkinson**, Community Corrections Division, joined the Pretrial Services on April 28 as an investigator.

**Nicole Stec**, Media & Communications began June 25 as an intern from Oakland University.

**William Veatch**, FM&O Custodial, was hired on June 9 as a general helper.

**Stephen Weiler**, FM&O Custodial, was hired on June 16 as a general helper.

### FOND FAREWELLS

**Edward Cameron**, Drain Commissioner's Pump Maintenance Division, hired in on Dec. 17, 1990 and bid a fond farewell on Feb. 7 as a pump maintenance mechanic II.

**Jennifer Delle-Monache**, Media & Communications intern, graduated in June with a bachelor's degree in communication from Oakland University.

**Melissa Halpin**, Office of Arts, Culture & Film intern, graduated from Oakland University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in June. She is moving to San Francisco to pursue a graduate degree in graphic design.

**Joyce Langdon**, Board of Commissioners, retired on May 23 after 22 years with the county. Joyce plans on spending lots of summer days up north, and chasing her grandchildren around. Joyce began her tenure working for Employment & Train-

ing CETA program as a secretary. Eleven years ago she joined the Board of Commissioners' staff as a committee coordinator.

**Alex Motton**, Information Technology, bid a fond farewell on April 3.

**Sandy Pulk**, Treasurer's Office, after 15 years bid a fond farewell on May 19 to take a new position as deputy treasurer with Waterford Township.

**Maggie Wade**, Information Technology, bid a fond farewell on May 8.

## NEW PLACES & FACES

### PROMOTIONS

**Brian Bennett**, Drain Commissioner's Engineering & Construction Division, was promoted on April 26 to civil engineer III.

**Evelyn Glossinger**, FM&O Administration, was promoted on Dec. 7 to secretary I.

**Shoma Khasnabis**, Drain Commissioner's Engineering & Construction Division, was promoted on April 12 to civil engineer II.

**Deborah Mason**, FM&O Custodial, was promoted on April 26 to custodial worker II.

**Holly Polakowski**, Drain Commissioner's Pump Maintenance Division, was promoted on Jan. 4 to a typist II.

**Mike Wilk**, Information Technology, was promoted on May 12 as manager of the Technical Systems & Networking Division.

### TRANSFERS

**Priscilla Carroll**, Safety Dispatch, transferred from Health on June 2.

**Jayne Chamarro**, Community Corrections/Court Community Service, transferred from Community Mental Health on March 30.

**George Miller**, Community Corrections manager, transferred from the Board of Commissioners on April 21.

**Nancy Wenzel**, Board of Commissioners, transferred from Probate Court on June 16 as a committee coordinator.

## CELEBRATIONS

### BIRTHS

**Guy Compton**, Information Technology, and his wife, Connie, are the proud parents of Richard Joseph, born May 15.

**Kelly Stout**, Drain Commissioner's Administration, and her husband, Brad, welcomed their new son, Brandon, into the world on April 16.

**Stephen Yates**, FM&O Custodial, and his wife, Terri, had a daughter, Jacquelyn, born on May 27, weighing 5-3/4 lbs. and measuring 18-1/2" long.

### MARRIAGE

**Mark Baker**, FM&O Maintenance, married Tammy Taylor on June 13.

**Michelle Birdwell**, Aviation & Transportation, married **David Stover**, Children's Village, on May 31.

**Janina Brozowski**, FM&O Custodial, married Tadeusz Macioszek on April 4.

**Lana Flanery**, Development & Planning, married **Greg Marohn**, Sheriff's Department, on Feb. 16.

**Michelle Demick**, Sheriff's Department classification agent, married John Twomey on May 23.

**Dawn Gozdor**, Personnel Human Resource Division, married Darryl Smith on May 17.

## KUDOS

**Chithra Chakrapani** and **Marina Lupyan**, Information Technology, have become American Citizens.

**Camellia Crowell**, Fiscal Services, graduated from the University of Detroit Mercy on May 10 with her bachelors in international business. She was also accepted into a program to study at Oxford University in England for two weeks in August.

**Sue Wells Delridge**, Parks & Recreation, was presented with the Distinguished Alumni Award from Central Michigan University at the winter Michigan Recreation & Parks Association (MRPA) conference.

**Jean Egan**, Health Division/Public Health Nutrition supervisor, received the Distinguished Service Award for her strong advocacy of public health nutrition issues.

**Betty Yancey**, Health Division/Public Health program coordinator, received the Excellence In Community Health Nursing Practice Award for her dedication and commitment to individuals, families, and the community. Both awards were presented at the Michigan Public Health

Association's Annual Conference in Grand Rapids.

**Emrol Nembhard**, Support Services/Central Garage, won the Silverdome's "Name the Newsletter" contest. His entry, "The Silver Scoop" was chosen out of 38 other contestants. Emrol also works as an Argenbright Security Guard for the Silverdome. Emrol is the longest serving Silverdome employee since it opened in 1975. Oakland County is pleased to congratulate Emrol on his winnings. Emrol received \$50 and other souvenir prizes.

**Jan Pung**, Parks & Recreation, was appointed to the Public Relations Network Board of Directors for a two-year term.

**Rochelle Tarchalski**, Personnel Human Resources Division, was named Co-op Student of the Year at Waterford Mott High School.

**The Oakland County Clerk/Register's Office** has donated \$300 collected from employee contributions to the Casual Day Fund to the Southeast Michigan Chapter of the Red Cross to assist the flood victims of Grand Forks, North Dakota.

**Glen Oaks Golf Course** received its fourth award from the city of Farmington Hills in November for landscaping and design excellence.

## THE SWAP SHOP

**FOR SALE: 1993 Mazda MX-3**, red, loaded, 24,000 miles \$9,900. Call Julie at 858-0622.

**FOR SALE: 1979 Mercedes 450 SLC**, excellent condition, \$13,000 or best offer. Ask for John (248) 335-3215.

## Oakland County Information Hotline: (810) 858-1022

Giving you your choice of news:

Press **1** for Employee Information

Press **2** for late breaking  
Oakland County news

Press **3** for Arts & Cultural Events

Press **4** for Community & Minority  
Affairs News

# Employee of the Month

by Jennifer Delle-Monache, Media & Communications

Need a blanket, Band-Aid or water bottle? **Lisa Grice** handles just that and much more. Lisa is a buyer in the Purchasing department and is the Employee of the Month for April.

As a buyer, Lisa is responsible for ordering supplies and equipment including medical supplies and alarm systems, just to name a few. Lisa began her career with the county ten years ago in a co-op program. Since then, Lisa has experienced new and exciting technology that will provide easier communication between accounting and financing. "One thing I love about my job is the diversity between different projects," said Lisa. In addition to Lisa's everyday routine, she has been asked to serve as chair for the Purchasing Module implementation for the financial system. It is a new program that involves reregistering 27,000 vendors. Lisa has also been assigned the task of creating a purchasing Internet site.

Lisa's first position was clerical and she went on to become procurement technician. After completing a business administration program, which took only nine months to complete, Joe Hylla, manager of Purchasing, promoted her to a buyer position. Some of the projects she has handled include the remonumentation program for the Clerk, substance abuse grant proposals and the list goes on. "All of Lisa's work has been innovative, accurate and timely," said Hylla.

Lisa is engaged and will be married next March. She enjoys mountain biking and resides in Auburn Hills.



**Karen Walker** is not only a dedicated employee, she has devoted her spare time to participating in county activities; such as the golf and bowling leagues. Her enthusiasm and dedication, both to her job and fellow employees, on and off the field, has earned her Employee of the Month honors for June.

Karen works in the Personnel department where she handles selection and placement for the receptionists and office supervisors. This includes testing their clerical skills through an interview. Karen also assists with negotiations in labor contracts which cover fifteen different bargaining units. She is also involved in administering the merit system.

Karen has been with the county for almost twenty-two years. She began in the Law Library and moved to Personnel, where she has remained. During her career in Personnel, there has been a department reorganization, which Karen helped to facilitate. "Karen is bright with a lot of experience in the county, which is an asset to the department of Personnel," said Nancy Scarlet, Personnel supervisor.

Karen enjoys spending time with her son, Nick. She also attends Oakland Community College part-time, where she hopes to advance her education with a degree in business management. Karen lives in Waterford.



Second chances is what Community Development is all about. Oakland County is proud to honor **Barbara Siegety** with the Employee of the Month award for her contribution to improve living conditions for county residents.

Barbara has been with the county for twenty years. She began her career in the Employment and Training Division where she coordinated federal reports. After ten years in the division, Barbara moved to Community Development and has been there ever since.

The Community Development department has many functions; one in particular is the Home Improvement program. The program is geared toward low to moderate income families who need home repairs. Barbara is in charge of assessing and verifying applications for this federally funded program. The Federal regulation standards are strict and monitored closely. The number of applications that come in yearly are around five hundred. Barbara, along with nine other team members, processes requests and about two hundred and forty receive assistance.

According to Barbara, one of the primary goals of the department is to provide "decent, safe, and sanitary foundations."

Barbara enjoys swimming, reading and spending time with her five grandchildren. Barbara lives in Waterford.



For eleven years, **Joanie Toole** has been reaching out to the animals of Oakland County. This month Oakland County rewards Joanie for her continued contributions to the Animal Control Center by selecting her as Employee of the Month. We've interviewed the animals, and they gave her two paws up for a job well done.

In 1987, Joanie interviewed for a co-op program through Mott High School. Sandy Gay, manager of Animal Control, felt that Joanie was such a valuable employee that she was hired after graduation for a newly created position. Sandy's predictions were not wrong. "She has really been an asset to our office. I am privileged to have been able to see her grow," said Sandy.

Eleven years later, Joanie is an office supervisor. She has literally brought the office into the Technology Age by creating numerous spreadsheets. These include control forms that give an updated profile of every animal that is brought in. Monthly and yearly reports are tabulated on the status of each animal, particularly adoption numbers, which Joanie says have increased considerably. Speaking of adoption, over the years Joanie has taken four cats from the shelter. "You can't help but take those who may not find a home," said Joanie.

Besides working as many hours as needed, Joanie enjoys playing with her nineteen month old daughter. She and her husband reside in Davison.

