

the

oakland county employees newsletter



# Telegraph

## State of County Address Highlights New Programs

A near capacity crowd of more than 250 people were on hand Thursday evening, February 26 in the auditorium of the Michigan State University Management Conference Center in Troy to hear Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson deliver his annual State of the County Address. Mr. Patterson used the occasion to talk about past accomplishments, present challenges and future opportunities.

During his 45 minute speech, which was carried live on WJR Radio, Mr. Patterson took the wraps off three major new initiatives for 1998. One of his proposals has a distinct cultural flavor, another focuses on improving Oakland County's national visibility and the third seeks to

assist small businesses in dealing with soaring health care costs.

Noting that the County's 40,400 businesses, especially those in the high tech arena, don't compete with Wayne or Kent Counties, but rather with the likes of Silicon Valley in

California or Boston's famed Route 128, Mr. Patterson announced a new national marketing strategy.

"This month I have sent letters to the CEOs of the top 117 high tech firms that line I-75 in Oakland County, inviting

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Over 250 people attended the State of the County Address

april 1998

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## Employees Turn Ideas Into Cold Hard Cash

Its amazing what happens when you put on your "thinking cap" and come up with an idea other people like. You wind up with money in your pocket. Six county employees have a little extra spending cash after qualifying as interim winners in the Employees Suggestion Program.

Ellen Davis Halsey, Clerk/Registers office, was presented with a \$50 check at the Managers Meeting on March 12 for her suggestion to mail out county directories and other publications at book rates rather than as third class mail. Her idea will save the county a significant amount of

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## PATTERSON / *Person to Person*

The Employee Suggestion Program is up and running again this year and so far six lucky individuals (as you will read in this edition of the Telegraph) have already cleared one major hurdle on their way to qualifying for one of the big prizes awarded at the end of the year.

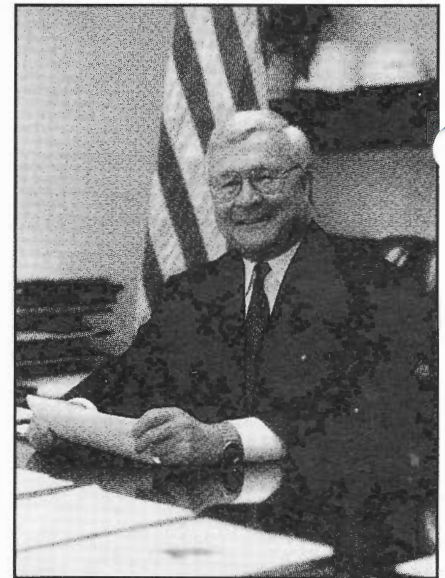
Last year, 220 suggestions were submitted for improving county government with the total savings from those implemented amounting to \$300,000. Since the program was initiated in 1993, the ideas turned in by the men and women of county government have saved taxpayers some \$3.3 million.

With the start of a new

year, several personnel changes have been made in the program. County Commissioner Shelley Taub, who has served as vice-chair of the ESP Committee for the past three years, has been elevated to chairperson. The new vice-chair is Bob Bingham, Probate Court administrator. Succeeding Jennifer Mason, Personnel analyst, as ESP Coordinator is Frank Russell, also a Personnel analyst. Jennifer will remain an active participant in ESP as a member of the Personnel Committee of ESP. Taking Frank Russell's place as coordinator on the Screening Subcommittee is Jordie Kramer of Personnel

while Carl Pardon, manager of Veterans Services is the newly appointed chair of the Screening Subcommittee.

If you've always wanted an all expense paid trip to some exotic location like Cancun or Hawaii - or wouldn't mind a few extra bucks in your pocket around the holidays, then now is the time to enter the Employees Suggestion Program. You could find yourself on a plane to a warmer climate or enjoying a mini cash windfall to spend if your cost saving idea is



**L. Brooks Patterson**  
Oakland County Executive

implemented by October 31. ■

## Troy Buildings Will Serve Growing County Needs

The County of Oakland has acquired two buildings in the city of Troy which will be used to meet the growing needs of residents who live in the south end.

By the end of the year, the Community Center Building which once housed Parks and Recreation will be transformed into a new facility for the 52/4 District Court. That will be great news for Judges Bolle, Drury and Martone who are trying to administer justice in cramped quarters in city hall.

Since the property is owned by the city, the county has signed a 20 year lease for use of the building while also agreeing to pay the \$5.5 million in renova-

tion costs and the regular maintenance fees.

"The new facility, when finished, will expand the court's space from its current 7,000 square feet to more than 23,000 square feet with plans already on the books to add another 10,000 square feet to the existing building,"

said Paul Hunter, manager of Facilities Engineering. "The new court will be able to provide better service for the citizens of Troy and Clawson."

The courtrooms in the new facility will be larger and one will even be able to accommodate the seating of a 14 member jury. But there are other advantages as well, such as more counter space to handle the daily flow of citizens who come into the court to conduct business, less traffic congestion and substantially more parking - 256 parking spaces to be exact. The new court is also closer to the city jail, which will make prisoner transfers infinitely easier.

Once the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Planning and Building Committee gives the go ahead, the work will begin on renovating another Troy building which will serve as the South Oakland Office Building. The building has been purchased by the county and approximately 35,000 of its 52,000 square feet will be renovated and transformed into new digs for Veterans Services, Circuit Court Probation and Probate Court. Those services had been in Royal Oak previously. ■

***Building renovations and additions will provide space for the 52/4 District Court, Veterans Services, Circuit Court Probation and Probate Court***



# Walk America Helps Those Not Able To Help Themselves



The 1998 version of Walk America is just around the corner and once again this year County employees will have an opportunity to raise money to fight birth defects and reduce infant mortality. The Oakland County team is scheduled to walk the 8 mile course on Sunday, April 25, 1998 at the Auburn Hills Campus of Oakland Community College. However, if that's not convenient for some people, other Walk locations in Oakland County are Farmington Hills and Troy.

Last year, Oakland County raised more than \$28,000 and finished fourth behind K-Mart, Kroger and EDS. This year, the County has a goal of 360 walkers and \$32,000.

The money raised at the hundreds of Walk America locations around the country will assist the March of Dimes in funding a variety of research, community service, advocacy and education programs.

Walk America is the nation's largest walking event, in large part because it's a fun filled, fast paced activity and one that stimulates an organization's morale as people work together in support of a common goal which is to give infants a healthy start in life. ■



## Volunteer Program a Big Success in '97

Oakland County's Youth Assistance Volunteer Program, which is administered by the new Family Division, racked up some pretty impressive numbers last year. As a group, YA volunteers contributed 37,000 hours of their time in 1997 to meeting the needs of youngsters. This translates into 1,150 children and youth sent to summer camp, 3,200 parents enrolled in parenting classes and 8,500 youths

involved in after-school and weekend recreational programs.

Some 975 volunteers worked with 26 local Youth Assistance boards to provide a wide range of community services to nearly 29,000 people.

Youth Assistance, in conjunction with Target Stores, produced an educational video in 1997 entitled: "Got caught? . . . Now what?" The video, which was produced with the assis-

tance of Children's Village and volunteer staff from the communities of Waterford, Birmingham, Novi, Southfield, Bloomfield Hills and Farmington, focused on discouraging young people from engaging in retail fraud. The video was so well done that it won second place honors in the nation-wide "Vision Award" competition for non-broadcast educational films. ■



# It's Miller Time in Boss of Year Contest

Everybody should have a secretary as devoted to their boss as Dodie LaMarte is to hers. One person you won't find disagreeing with that statement is George Miller, manager of the Community Corrections Division. He and Dodie have been a team ever

came with him.

One cold winter day in January, when Dodie had some free time on her hands because George was away at a convention, she sat down and wrote a letter nominating him for WJR's "Boss of the Year" award. Her letter apparently had some impact, because George was chosen as one of twenty finalists from all around the state of Michigan.

He and his wife were treated to a luxurious weekend at the fabulous Garland Resort in Lewiston, which is about an hour and a half drive from Oakland County.

"We just had a ball," Miller said. "The facility is gorgeous and we were treated like a king and queen."

After being interviewed on the Paul W. Smith show on WJR which broadcast live from the resort, George took his wife cross country skiing. A variety of sites were set up for skiers which offered differ-

ent things to eat. For example, one location offered trout fishing and if you caught a fish, they would pan fry it for you right there on the spot. The resort also offers other wintertime amenities such as snowmobiling and sleigh rides and Jacuzzis are standard equipment in every room.

The Saturday evening banquet was a culinary delight, topped off with live entertainment featuring a group called Martini Hill.

It was quite a weekend for George Miller and his wife. Even though he didn't win the top award, George said "everybody felt like a winner."

As for Dodie LaMarte - why did she go to all the trouble to nominate George for the award?

"George is just great with people," Dodie said. "You can always go to him if you have a problem or need to raise an issue he should be aware of. His door is always open to you." ■



from left to right: George Miller of Community Corrections, his wife Cindy and Paul W. Smith of WJR

since she became his secretary at the Health Division eight years ago. When George was named to head up the new Community Corrections Division, she

## Courthouse Cafeteria Under New Management

by Nicole Stec,  
Media and Communications

A piece of news for anyone who is interested in the welfare of their stomachs. Last January, The Oakland Room Cafeteria, located in the County Courthouse basement, changed management. The facility will now be supplied and serviced by Continental Food Services.

While diners have had mixed reactions to the transition, most believe the change is positive. "The food is much fresher than it used to be, and the staff has always been very pleasant and accommodating. I've only had good things to say about them," comments Vicky Buczek of Reimbursement. Private Practice

Attorney Scott Basset has seen the food in the Oakland Room continue to change for the better, "Years ago this stuff was inedible, but the service and food have improved." Luckily, his favorites, grilled cheeses, and onion rings, have remained an Oakland Room staple.

*"We were very impressed with the service and the quality of the food," . . . "more grab-and-go and a salad bar"*

The food service was changed at the Oakland Room because the previous provider, Oaks Management, had fulfilled the duration of its contract. "We made site visits to Continental Food Services before making a selection. We were very impressed with the service and quality of the food," says Chief of Support Services Todd Birkle, "Some changes that are being imple-

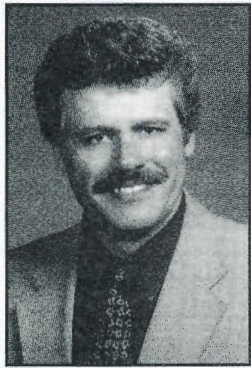
mented include more grab-and-go food and a salad bar."

If there are any diners who are not satisfied with Continental Food, Mr. Birkle says he would be interested to hear their opinions and suggestions. Also, in an effort to increase customer satisfaction Continental is lowering

prices, issuing a weekly coupon and printing a week long

menu. To offer a comment on the quality of service and food in the Oakland Room, just pick up a suggestion card next to the register and fill it out. Customer input does count. As Head Chef and Manager Suzanne Jarasz of the Oakland Room says, "They asked for a salad bar, we gave them a salad bar." ■





**Bob Dustman**  
Media and  
Communications

## The View from Here

Becoming comfortable with who we are can be one of life's most daunting challenges. Not everyone has the stuff of which heroes are made. Some of us learn early in life that we are not brave. The complexities of the computer are mastered by some, while others (myself included) have trouble finding the on/off switch.

Some of us are skilled on the field of athletic competition, while others have trouble walking and chewing gum at the same time. There are those among us who seek daring and adventure in our lives, like scaling the highest mountain or diving into the deepest part of the ocean. For others, adventure means trying to find a parking space at Metro Airport.

In most cases we are who we are because we made a conscious choice to be a certain kind of person. But sometimes we are limited in our ability to do certain things by genetics, temperament or simply interest.

I envy and admire people who can do electrical wiring, build things with their hands or

program computers. I can do none of those things, and frankly, on occasion it bothers me. But I tend to be more creative than analytical, which is why English was a whole lot easier for me than math. I've come to the conclusion though that each of us has his or her own strengths and weaknesses. We should accept and embrace them because they are what makes us unique and unlike any other person on the face of the earth. Our strengths and weaknesses make us special. We need to like and respect ourselves for who we are, not for who we think we should be.

I suppose if being able to wire a house or even build a house was important to me, then I'd learn how to do it. But it's not. So if I ever need to have those things done, I guess I'll just have to pay someone to do it. That's okay, because maybe that person can't do some of the things I can do. I'm comfortable with that. Like yourself - shortcomings and all. Because you're the only person you've got, and no one in this world is quite like you. ■

## CMH, Local Artists Collaborate on Unique Exhibit

by Ryan Anderson

*Shadows & Light* was a fitting title for the recent exhibition put on by the Community Mental Health Department in the Oakland County Galleria.

"The exhibit was exceptional in that it was a collaboration between county departments and our local artists, a great resource in our own backyard which was previously unknown," says Steve Weikal, Director, Office of Arts, Culture & Film.

The show, which ran from January 12 through February 27, featured artwork and poems contributed by area artists who interact with the county's Mental Health Department. The contributions were very eclectic, ranging from large scale acrylics on canvas to terracotta sculpture, post-modern poetry to color photography.

The highlight of *Shadows & Light* was a reception held on January 29. Contributors, friends and family, and CMH personnel joined to take in the multi-media experience in the County Galleria.



Contributor Julie Eliason and Office of Arts, Culture & Film Director Steve Weikal discuss one of her paintings

"The creative arts afford us the opportunity to communicate on a more intimate level than we do in everyday conversation," says CMH Community Education Specialist and Exhibit Coordinator Cristin Palm. "I think . . . and hope . . . this exhibit helped break down some stereotypes and impressed upon viewers that there are many ways of thinking, seeing, feeling and being." ■

### Spring Sports

#### Softball

The Oakland County softball team is forming. All interested parties should contact Jodi Stowe by April sixth. Her number is 858-0802.

#### Biking

Nelson Haynes of the Health Division is organizing a mid-June bike trip. The trip is open to all county employees, and will be held at Indian Springs Park. Biking is followed by a picnic. To reserve a place call Nelson at 858-1327.

#### Bowling

Spring Tournament, Saturday, May 2, noon at 300 Bowl. For info, call Nancy Seets at (248) 698-2700.



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them to join me in forming a new national marketing conglomerate," Mr. Patterson said. "I have dubbed this high tech association that we are forming "Automation Alley - Oakland County's High Tech Corridor."

In his speech, the County Executive also revealed that the finishing touches are being put on a two-part program that will make health care available to employers in Oakland County at a rate significantly lower than other comparable health care programs in the marketplace today.

Mr. Patterson noted that the first option, directed at companies with 100 employees or less, will offer a standard health care program with a full range of benefits to select from, but at extremely competitive rates. A second version, offered as an alternative plan for these same small size businesses, provides a subsidized health care program tailored for low to moderate income employees.

"We feel confident that we will be able to launch our health care plan for small businesses in Oakland County by the end of this year," Mr. Patterson said.

The third major undertaking for 1998 will be the first ever county-wide arts festival, which Mr. Patterson explained would be done

"Oakland County style." This triple header blend of an art show, a taste fest and a musical festival all rolled into one extravagan-

ment buy out offer was made to 400 eligible people who had previously worked for Oakland County and who had stayed long

for an "encore performance" this year.

Mr. Patterson closed out his speech on an emotional note when he introduced Dave Ross, director of Facilities Management, to the audience. Dave, on February 6, spent eleven hours on the operating table as doctors worked to remove a benign brain tumor.

"Dave told me before he went into the hospital that his personal goal was to be well enough to be able to attend tonight's State of the County Address in person," Mr. Patterson said. "Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to introduce all of you to one of the county's best: Dave Ross. Welcome back, Dave."

On that note, the auditorium filled with resounding applause as everyone rose to their feet to give Dave Ross a standing ovation.

In bringing down the curtain on a very memorable evening, Mr.

Patterson closed his speech by saying that "with the continued faithful allegiance to duty from our employees and equally important, with the continued support from you, the citizens of Oakland County, I have every confidence that Oakland County will maintain its position as a world class community as we charge toward the next millennium." ■

*"I have every confidence that Oakland County will maintain its position as a world class community . . ."*



*Robert Stempel, Executive Director of Energy Conversion Devices, introduces L. Brooks Patterson at the State of the County Address*

za is being billed as - "Arts, Beats and Eats." It is scheduled for Labor Day weekend.

This year's State of the County also contained items which will be of particular interest to County employees. By the end of this year, Mr. Patterson said he expects to make child care available to working parents who have small children at home. He pointed out that not only is child care good for the employees of county government, but it is good for county government because it will enable the County to attract and retain quality personnel.

In 1994, a deferred retire-

ment buy out offer was made to 400 eligible people who had previously worked for Oakland County and who had stayed long enough to vest in the retirement and health systems, but left before reaching retirement age. They were offered a lump sum payment on the retirement benefits in return for surrendering any future claim for county sponsored health care benefits. One hundred fifty-one of the 400 eligible employees accepted the offer and as a result the county realized an immediate savings of \$9 million, which extended over a thirty year period will total \$23 million in savings. So successful was the program that Mr. Patterson announced in his State of the County Address he would be bringing it back

**Mr. Patterson's State of the County address, both the text and the audio, is available on the county's home page at: [www.co.oakland.mi.us](http://www.co.oakland.mi.us).**



# Lives on the Line

by Nicole Stec, Media and Communications

Oakland County Deputies and Dispatchers are always on call keeping us safe. Usually, they remain in the background, performing their duties so efficiently that they are unobtrusive; but sometimes an occasion arises in which the community can pause and appreciate the efforts of these dedicated public servants. This was the case in February, when four of the Sheriff Department's finest employees received awards for their outstanding work.

Dispatcher Judi Markos received a departmental award when she proved to be a life line for Dona Allen and her two sons Kenneth and Brian. Allen called the dispatchers for help because she had been feeling dizzy and faint. At first, Markos was puzzled by the symptoms, but her training led

her to quickly diagnose the problem as carbon monoxide poisoning. "We learn to ask questions that ensure public safety, and officer safety," comments Markos, "No two calls are ever alike." Thanks to Markos' advice, the Allens safely evacuated their home

Deputies Thomas Kangas and Deputy Stephen Garfat were given departmental honors after they helped rescue Deputy Joe Brian who had fallen through thin ice on White Lake. Brian was chasing a fleeing suspect across the ice, but when he tried to cross, the surface didn't hold and he took an icy plunge into the freezing water. Kangas and Garfat were on hand to try and pull their fellow officer out with a rope. After several attempts, Brian was able to free himself, and was taken to the hospital.

In May of 1992, Deputy Gary Alexander came frighteningly close to a serial killer when he captured Leslie Allen Williams. Alexander's action put a stop to Williams, who was later found guilty of several murders. This month, Carl James, who is a retired state police lieutenant, and author of several books about serial killers, presented the commendation to Alexander along with a signed copy of his latest work.

No one could be prouder of the Sheriff's Department's accomplishments than Captain Barnett Jones. "These four represent all of the Oakland County officers," says Jones. "Quality of life is a big issue in Oakland County and we're standing up to meet the task." ■

## Recycling - A Cost Effective Approach

Since 1988, Oakland County government has been involved in a very aggressive recycling effort. Most of what is recycled is office paper, however there are other items such as plastics, cardboard and newsprint which can be handled in this way, but only when its practical and cost efficient to do so.

Over the past decade, Oakland County employees have recycled more than 2.5 million pounds of white, colored and computer paper. As a result, 9,700 cubic yards of waste have been diverted from area landfills, not to mention the trees that were saved to produce quality paper stock. Our recycled paper comes back to us in the form of paper towels and toilet paper.

While diverting waste from area landfills is one of the primary objectives of the county's recycling program, another goal is to dispose of recyclable waste in a manner that is more cost effective than land filling. By selling recycled paper to area brokers, the county has generated nearly \$56,000 in revenues over the past ten years. In addition, the county's efforts to get rid of thousands of cubic yards of paper without using landfills has saved the county more than \$75,000 during the past nine years.

The Facilities, Maintenance and Operations folks encourage everyone to be "waste watchers" by making sure that only appropriate items are recycled. See the list on the right for easy reference. ■

Recyclable	Not Recyclable
typing paper	paper clips
letterhead & stationery (colored ink is acceptable)	envelopes
bond paper	manila file folders
Xerox paper	inter-office envelopes
all computer paper	carbon paper
lined notebook paper (except yellow)	newspaper & magazines
blueprint paper	gummed labels
	paper coffee cups
	adhesives, glue binding & cellophane
	cardboard
	photographs
	plastic report covers
	post-it notes
	facsimile paper
	tissue paper
	rubber bands
	yellow lined notebook paper
	colored paper

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**Probate Court's Citizens Alliance continues the popular "Removing the Mysteries of the Probate Court Series". The next free seminar, open to the general public, will be held at the Birmingham Community House, from 1-3:30 p.m. on May 6. Questions can be directed to 858-0053.**

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# Al Dittrich . . . He Did It His Way

By: Patricia A. Lahar, Administrator, Residential Treatment Services, Oakland County Children's Village

1997 was a year of great loss. In September, Al Dittrich died at the age of 63, packing into that lifetime more good works than most people could accomplish in triple that life span. To thousands, he was known as "Uncle Al", the owner of Al Dittrich Oldsmobile, GMC Truck & Aurora of Waterford. We at Children's Village knew him as one of our original Advisory Council members, who later became a member of our Foundation Board. In this capacity, he gave of his time, his significant fundraising talents and ideas, his money, and his celebrity to benefit the over 1,500 children that pass through our doors each year. At every Children's Village golf fundraiser, there was an Al Dittrich car to be won, and that's just a small fraction of what he provided at each of the two annual Children's Village fundraisers. Much of what Al did for Children's Village, he wished to remain private. This was Al's way; to him, good works and the giving were his reward.

I met Al in 1992, and had the honor of knowing him as a friend and mentor. Al Dittrich was truly larger than life, someone who could make things happen to benefit others. Never have I had the privilege of being around such greatness. He was charismatic; a self-made success story; a devoted and loving husband to his beloved wife, Mary; and a devoted and proud father and grandfather. To know Al was to love him. I had the privilege of working on many charitable fund raising committees with Al, and experienced first-hand his tremendous compassion and generosity for those in need; be it children, the elderly, or any other disadvantaged group. He was tireless in his efforts to reach out and help others, and he did it with such impeccable class. He had a special gift of validating others, of focusing on their good points, and helping them to believe in themselves. He knew how to make working to benefit charities fun and exciting, and he would fill up each committee meeting with his

incredible wit, positive leadership, and creative ideas and plans. Indeed, when Uncle Al spoke up at a committee meeting, everyone stopped and listened intently. However, not everyone would notice that by the close of the meeting, Al had assumed more responsibility of things to be done, and pledged more money than anyone else at the table. Al had a genius for community networking and used his multiple personal and business contacts to bring in others who could assist with making things happen for the less fortunate.

Al was a very astute judge of people and of their character. This is quite evident in his choice of wife. His love and devotion to Mary was evident whenever he spoke of her. She was his closest confidant, his greatest delight, and a pillar of strength and quiet companionship. To best capture Mary, it is necessary to describe how she was at the funeral home visitation on Highland Road. Although hundreds and hundreds of people came to pay their respects, Mary greeted each person by name and hugged them warmly. She stood for hours without complaint, with only the thought of being a comfort to others. At one point in the evening, she turned to me and said, "I wish I could do more for the people here, Al's friends, all who loved him so much. They're all so sad. I wish I could do more to help them feel better." Here was a woman who had lost the most important person in the world to her, and her focus was only on being a comfort to others. I have never witnessed such strength of character and rare compassion. Al, you chose your spouse with rare wisdom.

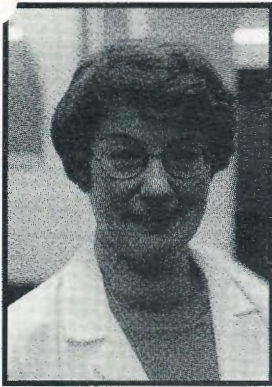
I will miss Al greatly, but he is still with me, just as he will remain with everyone whose life he touched. He taught us well, and we will carry on in his multiple works of charity, too numerous to mention in this newsletter. Suffice it to say that he had a special place in his heart for children and

the elderly. He was a special angel to the Lourdes Nursing Home. Much was made in the media of Al not taking care of his health. What these people don't know is that Al was handed a bad genetic deck of cards when it came to his heart. A lesser man and a lesser spirit probably would have succumbed to heart failure 20 years earlier. It says much for the force of Al's spirit that he lived to the age he did. More importantly, Al took excellent care of the health that really matters -- his spiritual health. His attainment of the very heights of spiritual health were successful beyond what most men dream of. Al truly "did it his way", and his way is one to be admired and emulated. I leave you with my final tribute to Al Dittrich, a re-working of the lyrics of Elton John's "Candle in the Wind", as these words capture Al's essence:

Goodbye Oakland's gem;  
may you ever grow in our hearts.  
You were the grace that placed itself  
where lives were much in need.  
You called out to our county,  
and you comforted those in pain.  
Now you belong to heaven,  
and the stars spell out your name.  
And it seems to me you lived your life  
like a candle in the wind:  
never fading with the sunset  
when the rain set in.  
And your footsteps will always fall here,  
along Oakland's brightest lakes;  
your candle's burned out long before  
your legend ever will.  
Leadership we've lost;  
these empty days without your wit.  
This torch we'll always carry  
for our county's golden prince.  
And even though we try,  
the truth brings us to tears;  
all our words cannot express  
the joy you brought us through the years.  
Goodbye Oakland's gem,  
from a county lost without your soul,  
who'll miss the wings of your generosity  
more than you'll ever know.



# Employee of the Month



**Janice Roth**

Meticulous attention to detail, accuracy and precision characterize Employee of the Month Janice Roth's career. Janice is the staff pharmacist at the Oakland County Medical Care Facility. However, she also provides prescriptions and expert advice for the Oakland County Jail, the Health Department's clinics, the Tuberculosis Control Program and Children's Village.

Some of Janet's most gratifying work involves the Tuberculosis Control Program. "I keep regiments for these patients. I eventually became very close with the nurse who I worked with. It's neat for us to work together because we all have the common goal of providing quality health care," says Janet. One part of quality care is being on constant alert for possible drug interactions. As Janet explains, this task needs extra caution. "We do lots of double checking on each others work as an extra measure of safety," says Janice.

Janice's plans for the future include her family's annual vacation to Interlochen State Park. "My family is the crux of my life," says Janice, "We love to spend time together." Her family includes her three grown and "happily self-sufficient children"; Leeanne, Kurt and Mark; a three year old grand child Joshua; and her husband Ray. Overall, Janice attributes their happiness to God, "God has opened and closed doors for us, and He has always been very wise," says Janice.

**Virginia Madill**



Tucked away in an unassuming office in Fiscal Services sits Employee of the Month Virginia Madill. From this small headquarters, Virginia supervises expense records for most Oakland County departments. In essence, she heads up some of the County's most efficient internal machinery. Virginia must stay focused in order to keep up with the work load and advancing technology. Her department just installed a new computer system, which means the whole staff must learn how to utilize the new technology. As a supervisor, Virginia has a true understanding of the team work required for her department to get the job done. "The challenge here is getting everything done by the end of the day. The work mounts up quickly. I wouldn't have received my award without the help of the girls," says Virginia.

As an antidote to her busy career Virginia enjoys quiet time reading or sewing. "I'm a huge history buff," says Virginia. Virginia's even thinking about getting in touch with history by pursuing an old fashioned craft. "I've always loved to sew; I used to make all my daughter's clothes," says Virginia. "Now I might take a quilting course through community education." Virginia and her husband live in nearby Sylvan Lake.

*more employees on page 12 . . . .*

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Another winner is Rosemarie Rottenberk, Medical Care Facility, who came up with a suggestion requiring shipments from vendors and others to include not only the county address, but also the building numbers on all deliveries.

Alisa Caniff, Probate Court, earned her \$50 by suggesting that information contained in the Runaway Report be placed on the mainframe for viewing instead of distributing copies of it to 15 different locations. Alisa's brainstorm will save the county about \$3,000 annually.

Linda Isenberg and Sue Cullen, Management and Budget Reimbursement/ Child Support/Banking, collaborated on a suggestion that will save the county about \$10,000 a year. They proposed electronically transferring monies due to the Clerk's Office on a daily basis.

Nancy VanCamp, Circuit Court, was awarded for her idea to have the Mail Room serve as a central location for the collection and distribution of inter-office envelopes. ■

## The Training Track

After a fast-moving, challenging year working on Phase I of the Human Resources Financial Information System Project, the Training Unit is ready to sprint ahead on the internal inservice training programs offered to all County employees. For your convenience, we have established a Training Directory found under **O:\personnel\training**. Within this directory you will find the Oakland County Personnel Training Course Descriptions, the Tentative Training Schedule, and the Registration/Request to Attend Training Program Form. These documents were created in WordPerfect 5.2 for Windows. The specific filenames are: **descript.doc** for course descriptions; **schedule.doc** for the tentative training schedule; and **regist.frm** for the registration/request to attend training program form. The file names are read-only so please feel free to open the documents, review, and print them as needed. If you do not have access to the "O" drive, contact the Training Unit at 858-7591 for a copy of these materials. ■

## the Telegraph

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# kudos celebrations com

## kudos

Oakland County  
Clerk/Register, **Lynn**

**D. Allen**, was appointed to the Michigan Supreme Court Local Intergovernmental Council. This council will be extremely helpful in advising the Michigan Supreme Court in matters concerning local funding units and trial courts. Michigan Supreme Court Chief Justice Conrad L. Mallet, Jr. appointed Mr. Allen.

**James Dunleavy**, recreation supervisor for Oakland County Parks, earned the 1997 Young Professional Award.

**Sandra Dorey**, recreation supervisor for Parks & Recreation, won the 1997 Program Leadership Award.

**Waterford Oaks Waterpark** won the 1997 Facility Design Award.

**Karen Tiernan**, Community Mental Health, is the proud mother - her 24 year old son, Brett, bowled a perfect 300 game on 2-12-98.

On December 11, 1997, Governor Engler appointed **Linda Hallmark** to be a Probate Court Judge, filling the vacancy created by Wendy Potts being appointed by the Governor to the Circuit Court Bench.

Kudos to **Dennis C. Jones**, Workers' Compensation Specialist of Risk Management and Safety, who has been elected as a "trustee" of the Michigan Public Risk Management Association (MiPRIMA). MiPRIMA's mission is "to promote risk management's effectiveness in public entities in order to preserve human and economic values". The term of office is three years.

Congratulations to **Ron Feneley** of the Eight Mile Water Department for passing the S-2 exam.

Congratulations to **Wayne Harbin** of the Eight Mile Water Department for passing the S-1 exam.

Congratulations to **John Chestnut** of the Eight Mile Water Department for passing the S-3 exam.

## births

Congratulations to **Carol Vandermeer** and her husband Pete who are the proud new parents of Nathan Louis born January 24, 1998.

Correction: In the last issue, the birth announcement for **Mike Pucher's** daughter, Community Development, was incorrect. Her name listed as Kay and is actually Amanda Kay.

**Phillip Bertolini**, Equalization Division, and

his wife, Kathy, welcomed their second son, Steven Paymond, born February 4, 1998.

**Valentina Standfield**, Equalization Division, and Larry D. Hannah, welcomed their son, Tyriq Lemar, born August 20, 1997.

**Linda Cebulski**, Equalization Division, welcomed her first child, a son, Connor Edward, on February 3, 1998.

**Shawn Gamble** of the Drain Commissioner's office, Inspection Department, and his wife Lisa, are the proud parents of a daughter, Zhane', born on November 21, 1997.

**Joseph Gardner**, Drain Commissioner's Office, Inspection Department, and his wife, Heidi, are the proud parents of a son, Alexander, born on January 25, 1998.

## marriages

**Peggy Calkin** was married on October 10, 1997 to Michael Craft.

**Jennifer Mead**, Register of Deeds, married John Rossignol on October 25, 1997.

**Holly Hagerman**, Equalization, married Jeffery Oen on November 1, 1997.

## new employees

**Sandra Platz**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started January 28, 1998.

**Linda Coleman**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started October 22, 1997.

**Sandra Bruni**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started October 27, 1997.

**Dawn Teller**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started January 14, 1998.

**Nina Roberts**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started November 3, 1997.

**Sue Palmer**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started October 15, 1997.

**Catherine Tucker**, General Clerical, Clerks Office, started January 21, 1997.

**Theresa Fedorinchik**, General Clerical (former student), Register of Deeds, was hired full time October 8, 1997.

Effective 1-12-98, **Amy Skewes**, Probate Court, was selected to be secretary for Judge Linda Hallmark.

**Victoria Leonard**, Probate Court, was hired on 1-12-98 as judicial staff attorney for Judge Hallmark.

**Megan Carroll** and **Sarah Basinger**, Probate

Court, both began their duties as court clerks for Judge Hallmark in January, 1998.

**Kimberly Lee**, Probate Court began as court clerk for Judge Eugene Arthur Moore on January 20, 1998.

Effective January 5, 1998, **Michael Zerkel** assumed duties as court clerk for Judge Sandra G. Silver.

**Ebru Adoglu**, Equalization, was hired full time on June 6, 1997 as Appraiser Trainee.

**Paula Jefferson** was hired as Child Welfare Worker I for the Walled Lake Office of the Family Division: Probate/Circuit Court on 1-12.

**Karen Volz** was hired as a General Clerical employee assigned to the Juvenile File Room of the Family Division: Probate/Circuit Court on 1-20-98.

**Bonnie Hargraves**, Equalization, hired in full time on July 29, 1997 as Appraiser Trainee.

**Stacey Campbell**, Equalization, hired in full time on June 9, 1997 as Appraiser I.

**Tracey Burney**, Equalization, hired in full time on September 18, 1997 as Appraiser I.

**Barbara Percoulis** was hired on October 27, 1997 as General Clerical in the Eight Mile Water Department.

**Rodney Owen** was hired on December 1, 1997 as Maintenance Laborer in the Sewer Drain Maintenance Department.

**Martin Griffiths** was hired on November 24, 1997 as Maintenance Laborer in the Sewer Drain Maintenance Department.

**James Harding** was hired on February 2, 1998 as Maintenance Laborer in the Eight Mile Water Department.

**Donald Hendrix, Jr.** was hired on February 9, 1998 as Maintenance Laborer in the Sewer Drain Maintenance Department.

**Dianna Holloway** was hired on December 15, 1997 as Engineering Aide I in the Southeast Oakland County Sewer Department.

**Rick DeVisch** was hired into the Drain Commissioner's Office, Engineering and Construction Division on December 15, 1997.

**Ken Boyd** was hired on 11-24-97 as a Student Engineer in the Tech Support Unit of Facilities Management.

**Patricia White** was hired on 1-26-98 as a General Helper in the Custodial unit of FM&O.

**Jason White** was hired on 10-29-97 in the



# ing & going swap shop

Safety unit of FM&O as General Helper.

**James McBride** was hired on 12-1-97 in the Custodial unit of FM&O as General Helper.

**Troy Deatherage** was hired in the Telephone unit of FM&O on 12-8-97 as Telephone Comm. Tech.

**John Meade** was hired in the Custodial unit of FM&O on 1-5-98 as General Helper.

**Sean Washington** was hired in the Custodial Unit of FM&O as General Helper on 1-6-98.

**Eric Odronic** was hired in the Safety Unit of FM&O as General Helper on 1-21-98.

**Patty Abear** was hired in the Custodial Unit of FM&O as General Helper on 9-20-97.

## promotions

**Paula McDonald** and **Christine Taylor**, Probate Estates, were promoted from General Clerical to Typist I effective January, 1998.

**Phillip Bertolini**, Equalization, was promoted to Administrator of Real and Personal Property on July 19, 1997.

**Joyce Bowens**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk II on February 14, 1998.

**Karen Deavers**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk II on August 1, 1997.

**Christopher Ewald**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk II in November of 1997.

**Beverly Foss**, Equalization, was promoted to Appraiser III on November 18, 1997.

**Staci Gatt**, Equalization, was promoted to Appraiser I in September 1997.

**Jim Gibson**, Equalization, was promoted to Senior Engineer Technician on January 5.

**Ann Grady**, Equalization, was promoted to Appraiser I July, 1997.

**David Hieber**, Equalization, was promoted to Chief, Tax Appeals, on February 13, 1998.

**Gerald Hieber**, Equalization, was promoted to Chief, Equalization Field Services, Real Property on February 13, 1998.

**Debra LaClair**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk II on October 8, 1997.

**Carol Little**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk I on August 30, 1997.

**Sharon Longman**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk I on August 10, 1997.

**Debbie Mausolf**, Equalization, was promoted to Equalization Clerk on January 5, 1998.

**Amy Miljour**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk I on January 9, 1998.

**Glenda Welz**, Equalization, was promoted to Equalization Clerk on January 5, 1998.

**Coreen Wilson**, Equalization, was promoted to Clerk I on January 5, 1998.

**Sheridan Wood**, Equalization, was promoted to Equalization Clerk on August 8, 1997.

**S. Mark Ingsbee** was promoted on January 3, 1998 from Maintenance Mechanic II to Lake Level Technician in the Sewer & Drain Maintenance Department.

**Christopher LaFave** was promoted on January 17, 1998 from Maintenance Mechanic I to Maintenance Mechanic II in the Sewer Drain Maintenance Department.

**Penny Knope** was promoted on August 30, 1997 from Typist II to Clerk III in the Sewer Drain Maintenance Department.

**Chad Reed**, Drain Commissioner's Office, Survey Crew, was promoted from Engineering Aide II to Engineering Technician on January 31, 1998.

**Mark Slankster**, Maintenance Unit of FM&O was promoted to General Maintenance Mechanic on 10-11-97.

**William Veatch**, Custodial Unit of FM&O was promoted to Custodial Worker II on 12-20-97.

**Stephan Weiler**, Custodial Unit of FM&O was promoted to Custodial Worker II on 12-20-97.

## transfers

**Anita Campbell** transferred from the Equalization Division to Information Technology on December 20, 1997 as GIS Data Technician.

**Penny Peters** transferred from Equalization Division to Information Technology on December 20, 1997 as GIS Data Technician.

**Gail Naramor** transferred from Equalization to Payroll on February 6, 1998.

**Linda Thweny** transferred from Purchasing to Equalization on November 17, 1997.

**Holly Oen** transferred from CMH to Equalization on September 22, 1997.

**Katherine Huyghe** transferred from the Health Division to the Drain Commissioner's Office on November 22, 1997.

**Derek Brown**, Custodial Unit of FM&O, transferred to the Garage on 11-30-97.

**Garry Jackson**, Custodial Unit of FM&O, transferred to the Sheriff's Department on 12-20-97.

**Priscilla Carroll**, Safety Unit of FM&O, transferred to Community Mental Health in Dec.

## fond farewells

**Joy Hornkohl**, Equalization, resigned her position as Personal Property Auditor on March 6, 1998 to work as an Associate at BDO Seidman.

**Neil LaForm** retired on November 12, 1997 as Lake Level Technician in the Sewer Drain Maintenance Department. Neil started his county employment on September 1, 1967. Best of luck and happy retirement!

**Olden Green** of the Drain Commissioner's Office, Inspection Department, resigned on November 5, 1997. He has moved to Arizona and is working for ADOT.

**Michael Hutchins**, Custodial Unit of FM&O, retired on 2-1-98 after 27 years of service.

**Vivian Jones**, Custodial Unit of FM&O, retired on 1-15-98 after 21 years of service.

**Myrledeen Conner** of the Custodial Unit of FM&O, resigned on 1-2-98.

## condolences

The Court's Psychological Clinic reports two sad events: the sudden death of **Amy Woodruff's** husband, Kim, on December 3, 1997, and the death of **Ann Wiersma's** father who died suddenly on December 12, 1997.

## ads

Ty Original Beanie Babies - retired and hard-to-find. 814-9362. Make me an offer.

For sale: 1979 Mercedes 450 SLC, excellent condition, silver w/blue interior. \$13,000. Ask for John at 248-335-3215.

For sale: 1988 Volkswagon Jetta at \$2,800. New brakes and tires, well maintained. Contact Linda at 248-335-3215.

For sale: 1994 Grand Am GT, white, V6, auto, loaded, power everything, keyless entry, alarm, excellent condition, 51 K miles, \$8,200 or best offer at 248-452-216200

For sale: Portable Dishwasher, multi-cycle, almond, wood top, works well, \$60; Yamaha Alto Saxophone, \$400 or best offer; electric typewriter, \$25; new broadcast fertilizer spreader, \$10; call 248-814-8138.



# Employee of the Month



## Veronica Wright

When Employee of the Month Veronica Wright toils over her computer in the Environmental Health Office, she's contributing to the safety of all county residents. Though the vital nature of her work may not be immediately apparent to the outsider, Veronica's efforts have far-reaching effects. Her computer entries contain important information about depths and locations of Oakland County wells. When Veronica's on the

job, a well permit is not issued until the site is catalogued and the water proven safe.

Veronica's work at the computer is integral to the county's safety, but her favorite part of the job is more personal. "I really enjoy meeting with clients, and helping them gather property information before they work on well or septic systems." Veronica's hobby, selling Mary Kay products, keeps her in contact with clients. In this case, however, clients usually include family and friends. She shows her musical side by singing in the church choir and playing the drums. Veronica's family includes her husband and her three year old son Julian.



## Diane McGraw

January's Employee of the Month Diane McGraw enjoys a challenge. "My job is interesting because things change all the time; it's like a puzzle where all the numbers have to balance out," explains Diane. Her goal at Employment and Training is to establish proper cash management. As a result, federally funded money coming into Oakland County's Employee Training program will generally be equivalent to money spent within the

program itself. Diane attributes her on the job skills to an accounting background and "lots of trial and error."

Since Diane is so good with numbers, it only makes sense that she and her husband enjoy trying their odds with an annual trip to Las Vegas. Or maybe they just enjoy the sunshine, because they also take vacations to visit family in Florida. "We go every year, so we know how to entertain ourselves when it rains," says Diane. "We just go to the movies." There's only one problem with this tactic, as Diane admits, "My husband likes karate films, and I love romantic comedies!" Diane lives with her husband, step son, and three beloved cats.

## Jamie Lyons



Jamie Lyons looks back fondly on her twenty-three years of service to Oakland County's Health Department. "I grew with the job," says this Employee of the Month. During her time with the Department, Jamie was a welcome intermediary between employees and the bureaucracy of health insurance. "I tried to be an employee advocate by making sure that benefits were suited to the employee's needs," explains Jamie.

Recently Jamie found herself in the position of growing with a whole new set of responsibilities. She transferred to Community Corrections, and is eagerly learning the ins and outs of her new office. "I'm excited by the possibility of being an expert in a whole new field," says Jamie.

While she learns to master her new career, Jamie is also staying on top of issues on the home front. "Evening and weekends are totally for the kids," says this devoted mom who loves to cheer her kids on at volleyball and softball games. Jamie and her family are looking forward to this summer when they can spend time together outdoors.

## Val Yezbick



The first things that visitors see when they enter the Executive Office Building are the One Stop Shop-- and Employee of the Month Val Yezbick's smiling face. "I'm enthusiastic about the whole division," says Val, "The people I work with are bright, and creative. They're the best I've ever worked with." Her enthusiasm shows as she greets customers and helps them find just the right map to meet their needs. The One Stop Shop serves clients who are interested in Oakland County development, such as landscape architects, builders and surveyors, as well as local property owners.

If the information that a client needs is not available at the One Stop Shop, Val never says "Sorry, I can't help you." She looks for a solution. "If I can't get the information that a client needs, I'll refer them to someone who can. We keep looking for resources," says Val.

Val has proved to be a lucky resource for her four adopted cats. She describes them as "Two bully boys: Tiko Alexander, and Socks McKinley; and two old girls: Marie Mouse, and Ann Elizabeth." Val lives in Waterford where she spends her leisure time feeding her addiction for mystery novels.

## 1998 Totals

\$6,845.75

60%

Casual Day Fund

ESP Suggestions

Direct Deposit