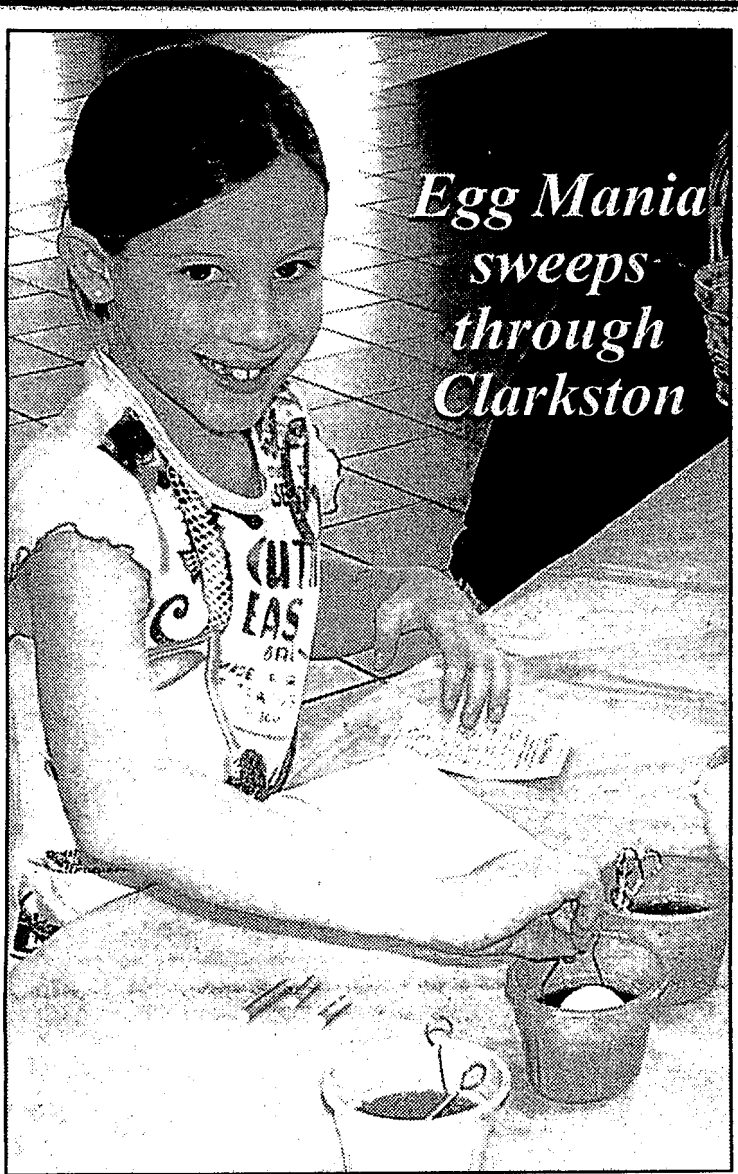


The Clarkston News

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Vol. 77 No. 31 Wed., April 12, 2006

2 Sections 56 pages 50¢



Egg Mania sweeps through Clarkston

Amanda Checkowsky takes time away from egg decorating to smile at Egg Mania on April 8 at Clarkston High School. See more pictures from the Independence Township Parks and Recreation event on page 8A. Photo by Noah Purcell

What do they make?

Examining teachers and administrative salaries

BY ANDREW DUPONT
Clarkston News Staff Writer

Despite mixed responses to *The Clarkston News'* recent public survey on issues related to Clarkston School's non-homestead millage, one question yielded the most similar answers.

Regardless of whether or not people support or disapprove of Clarkston School's upcoming millage proposal, a large portion of survey responses indicated the public is unaware of how much the district's teachers and administrators are paid.

For the 2005-2006 school year, Clarkston teachers' contracts are broken into five divisions based on education level: Bachelors degree, Master's degree, Master's degree + 30 credits, Specialist in Education and doctorate.

Those categories are cross-referenced with the years of employment (ranging between one a 16 years) to determine the teacher's contract salary.

The result is a grid schedule. The lowest cell on the grid is a first year teacher with a Bachelor's degree at \$35,356, the highest being a teacher with a PhD and 16 plus years of experience at \$85,563.

The increase based on education level increases exponentially over time as well, with the gap between a BA and PhD starting at approximately \$7,500 for a first year teacher and ending at approximately \$15,000 for a teacher with 16 plus years of experience.

District administrator's contracts salaries are also determined through scale depending on experience. The following salaries do not include benefits, stipends or bonuses.

• **Assistant principals** range from \$77,197 to \$88,165. The district currently employs four assistant principals.

• **High School assistant principals** range from \$82,967 to \$95,930. The district currently employs four high school assistant principals.

• **Elementary principals** range from \$86,422 to \$96,849. The district currently employs seven elementary principals.

• **Sashabaw Middle School Principal** Linda Foran's salary is currently \$98,198

• **Clarkston Junior High School Principal** Shawn Ryan's current salary is \$97,677

• **Clarkston High School Principal** Janice Meagher is currently \$111,291.

• **Executive Director** positions range from \$98,306 to \$110,189. These positions include Geraldine Moore (Pre-K and Elementary Education), Bruce Beamer (Business and Financial Services), Matt McCarty (Information and Technology Services), Linda Nester (Human Resources) and Anne Evans (Student Supervisor Services)

• **Deputy Superintendent** Dave Reschke's contract salary is currently \$114,565.

• **Superintendent** Dr. Al Robert's contract salary is currently \$142,000.

The administrative numbers were either obtained from Anita Banach, Director of Communications and Marketing, or from the Salary Schedule for the 2003-2004 school and figuring an additional two percent to match the increase allowed by the state starting in the 2004-2005 school year.

Look in next week's issue of *The Clarkston News* for more information regarding district salaries and benefits.

Results are in...

Clarkston News survey shows split over millage, teachers paid 'fairly'

BY JENNY MATTESON
Clarkston News Editor

On March 22, *The Clarkston News* began a survey asking readers their opinions on various aspects of the Clarkston School District and the upcoming school millage ballot.

After two and a half weeks of collection, the final numbers are available and 52 surveys were submitted. Eleven were delivered by hand and 41 were entered through our Web site, www.clarkstonnews.com.

Following is the first in a three part series discussing the results.

Let's talk schools

Of the 52 surveys, only one question received a consistent reply: Clarkston Schools does a good job of educating students. Some of the terms used in describing the district's general performance included excellent, wonderful, couldn't be happier, above average and

great asset.

"I think Clarkston Schools are exemplary and should be a model for other districts in our area," wrote one responder.

Eight responders did voice displeasure with the district. Fiscally, responders wrote on what they consider the district's "over spending" and "palace building." Academically, one respondent commented that "student performance expectations are not as rigorous as other states" and another said higher levels of education are not available.

How about taxes

Whether or not residents support the 10-year, 19.2491 mil ballot request was close: 26 support, 20 do not support, three are on "the fence" and three did not respond.

Reasoning behind was diversified. Some commented that due to Proposal A, the funding is neces-

sary. Others liked not having to vote on the millage again.

"There seems to be a difference between perception and reality in the news coverage we have read. The realities are a.) Proposal A originally passed with the expectation that 18 mills would be levied on non-homestead property and b.) no more than 18 mills can be collected on non-homestead property. Unfortunately, most people do not understand these facts and may thus be alarmed by the perception that the district will actually collect the 19.2491 mills. It certainly seems prudent to minimize the election costs (non-value added expenditures) as the board is doing with this request. More news articles clearly and factually defining the situation would be helpful to the community and might positively affect circulation."

"They can not collect more than 18 mills - What is the issue?"

Please see Survey, page 26A

Millstream

L. Brooks Patterson stops by for a conversation

Page 1B



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Sports

Wolves hurtle into spring

Page 22A



Discolored Paper



Stories from ancient China

Maureen Esther of Rochester Hills teaches history through storytelling, and travels the country sharing tales dating back thousands of years. On April 5, Esther visited Sashabaw Middle School and presented seventh graders with tales of Ch'in Shi Huang Ti, the first Emperor of China, and his army. Pictured, Esther holds a replica of a theatrical robe similar to the one the emperor wore.
Photo by Andrew DuPont

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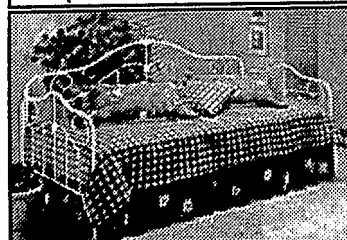
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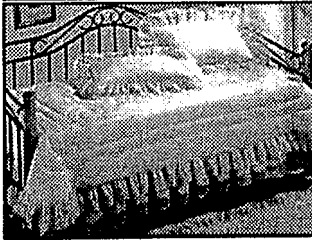
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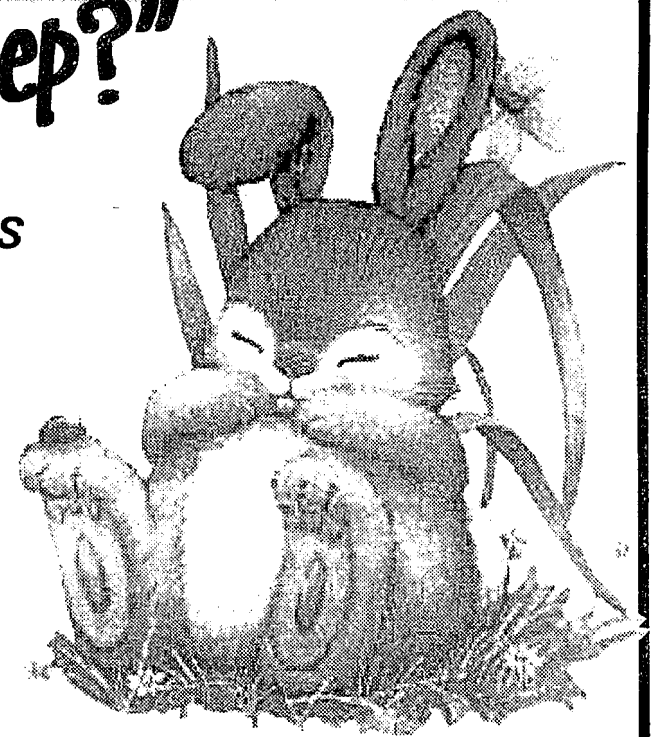
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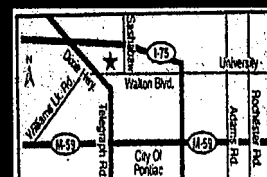
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The Second Front

Briefly

Band to perform

The Clarkston Community Band, under the direction of Vince Chrisman, presents "Broadway's Hits" on April 25 at 7 p.m. at Sashabaw Middle School. The event features special guest performances by the Stardusters Jazz Band and Benthic Brass Tuba Ensemble.

Hear award winning show tunes from "Wicked," "Rent," "West Side Story" and many more. Sit back and relax as Stardusters perform jazz versions of "On Broadway" and "Chicago." The Benthic Brass will relive the patriotic days of George H. Cohan with his favorite melodies.

The concert is free and all are invited. For more information, contact Independence Township Parks and Recreation at 248-625-8223 or e-mail clarkstonband@hotmail.com. You can also go online to www.clarkstonband.org.

Post office hours for tax day, April 17

The rush is on to file those last-minute tax returns – and tax day approaches on April 17.

For returns to be filed on time, they must be postmarked no later than April 17. The Clarkston Post Office will provide postmarks until 6 p.m. at the retail window that day.

Mail deposited before 4:45 p.m. in the drive up boxes located next to the Post Office will also receive a postmark of April 17.

For those truly procrastinating tax filers, the Royal Oak Post Office is until 11:59 p.m. on April 17.

Scramble for Springfield Egg hunts

The Easter Bunny has prepared all year for Springfield Township Parks and Recreation's Eighth Annual Easter Egg Hunt and is ready to personally greet all who attend April 14 at the Mill Pond Park.

To make sure everyone heads home with enough candy and toys, the Easter egg hunts are divided into age specific categories.

Ages four and younger hunt from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Ages five-12 hunt from 2-4 p.m. Pictures with the Easter Bunny may also be taken, with your camera or video recorder, for \$3.00.

Door prizes, snacks and punch will be provided. A moonwalk, courtesy of Southern Lakes Parks and Recreation, will also be on-site, weather permitting.

The egg hunt will be held rain or shine and participants are asked to bring their own baskets. Hunters are asked to arrive half an hour early for their age related time slot.

Cost is \$5 per resident child, \$7 per non-resident child. Registration is required by 5 p.m. on April 13 and will not be available the day of the event.

Of all the wholesome evening activities available to teenagers, the Springfield Township Teen Flashlight Hunt is perhaps the best. The search is on, April 13 from 8-10 p.m. at the Mill Pond Park in Davisburg.

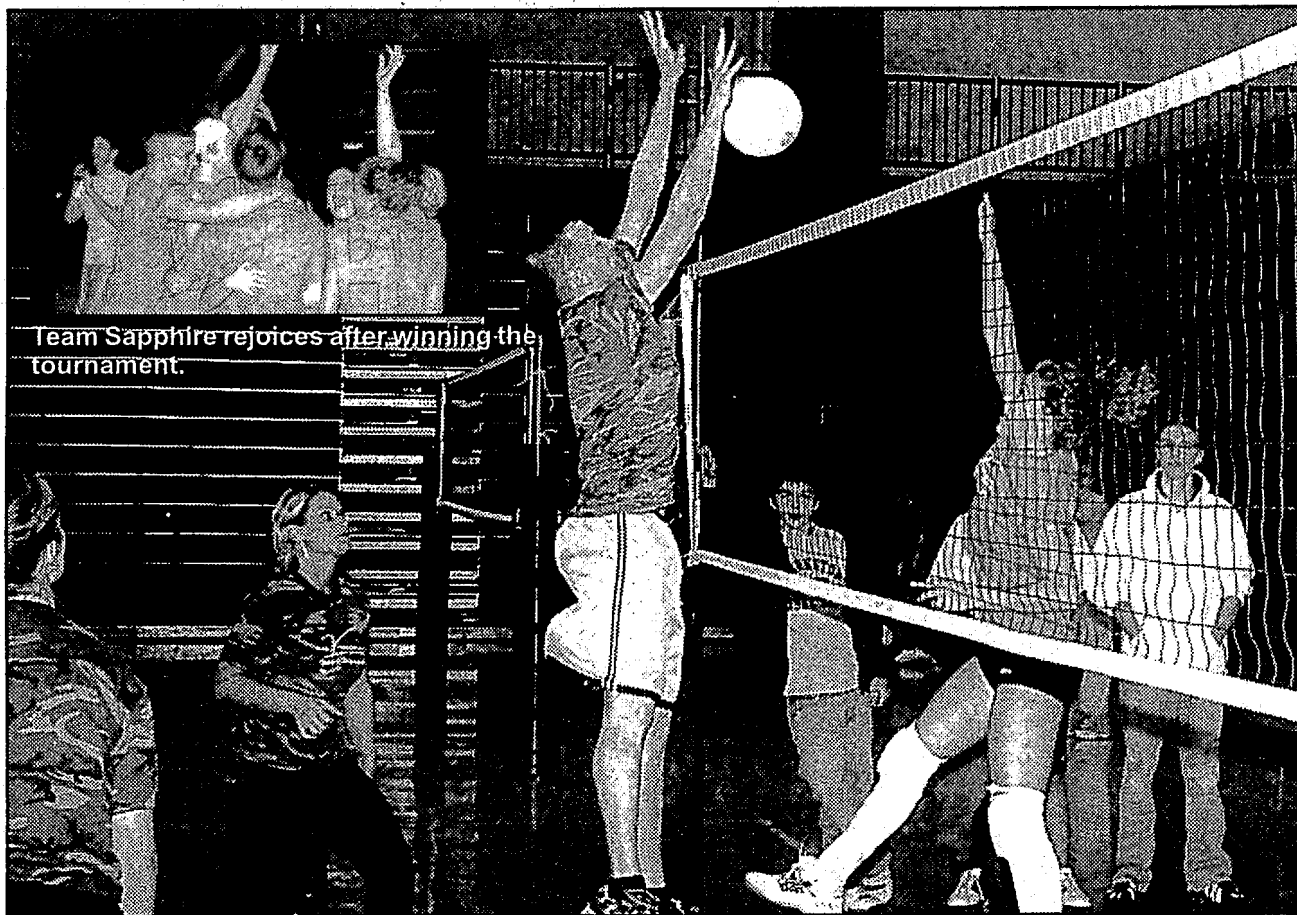
Participants are required to bring a flashlight and something to put their eggs in. Awards will be given to the top three teen egg collectors. Door prizes, pizza and a beverage will also be provided.

The hunt will be held rain or shine and a minimum number of participants are required.

Cost is \$7 per person. The hunt is open to ages 13-17 and 18-year-olds currently attending high school.

Pre-registration is strongly encouraged but will be accepted at the door.

For additional information, please call Springfield Township Parks & Recreation at 248-634-0412.



Team Sapphire rejoices after winning the tournament.

Rejected! Teacher and cross country coach Jamie LaBrosse fends off a spike from sophomore Besty "Bam" Mellen.

Sweet revenge...

BY ANDREW DUPONT

Clarkston News Staff Writer

Rare is the opportunity for a student to spike a ball at their teachers without getting suspended.

On April 5, however, students were not allowed, but encouraged to do so during the student versus staff volleyball tournament.

In the end, the students tasted sweet victory as a team of sophomores won against a previously undefeated team of teachers.

Combined, 16 teams entered the tournament including students from Clarkston Junior High and Clarkston High School. Their opponents were a mix of teachers from several schools.

The third annual event was also a fund-raiser for the Jimmy V Foundation for Cancer Research. In total the event raised \$3,800 for the foundation.

"We are very pleased with the overwhelming generosity of the Clarkston community, staff and students," wrote CJHS teacher Shawn Shepherd who also played on Orange Crush. Sheperd, along with fellow Blue and Gold Club sponsors Nick Hagewood and Kim Fletcher, started the tournaments three years ago.

Starting a new tradition, a wall above the high

school's indoor track became a monument to relatives and friends of CHS students whose lives were effected by cancer.

The tournament started with four pools of four teams – two for staff teams and two for student teams – with the top two teams from each pool moving to the final brackets.

At first the staff teams – especially the Orange Crush, who were undefeated in three years of competition – made seemingly short work of students, but one team would not submit.

Known as Team Sapphire, the CHS sophomores fought past teams of older students and teachers to earn a spot in the championship match against Orange Crush.

The match started out evenly, but slowly Orange Crush began to falter. The members of Team Sapphire were quick to take advantage with loud and spirited play that led them to a five point victory.

The staff that made up Orange Crush were good spirits about their first loss, shaking hands and congratulating the students who defeated them.

"We knew we were going to win," said Matt "Squeaks" Hall, who attributed the team's victories to good chemistry and team work. "It just works."



A monument to friends and relatives of Clarkston students who were effected by cancer lined the wall of the school's indoor track. For more photos from the event, go to page 19A. Photos by Andrew DuPont

Budget cuts looming for Clarkston Schools

Pink slips likely part of cost reduction

BY ANDREW DUPONT
Clarkston News Staff Writer

There is no avoiding the harsh necessity of budget cuts, according to the Clarkston School Board.

Board members agreed during discussion at the April 10 meeting that the district has been fortunate to avoid major cuts for several years, but that cushion zone is gone.

Now, according to recent discussion by the board, teachers may be receiving pink slips by the end of the month as a result.

Classroom consolidation and program eliminations topped the list of proposed solutions presented to the board by Deputy Superintendent Dave Reschke and Executive Director of Pre-K and Elementary Education Geraldine Moore.

Only an hour after congratulating members of the Future Problem Solvers team for winning the state championship, board members discussed options for budgets cuts that would remove all funding for the program and other extracurricular activities starting next school year.

The administration is looking to cut \$2 million in expenditures for the 2006-07 budget to reduce a potential deficit.

"Please keep in mind that the process of reducing future spending this year by \$2 million doesn't balance the budget and should be seen as a temporary fix by this board and administration," said Superintendent Dr. Al Roberts at the beginning of discussion.

The eight proposals were only discussed and no action was taken by the board. The board is expected to take action on the matter at the April 24 board meeting.

According to the presentation, pro-

posed reductions include:

- Increasing average class sizes at Clarkston High School to 29:1, at Clarkston Junior High to 28.5:1 and at Sashabaw Middle School to 28.5:1. The proposed changes increase class size by approximately 1.5 students over current estimates. The change would save approximately \$757,406 and would reduce staff by 8.6 full-time employees.

- Increasing class size average at non-Title I K-5 schools to 25:1 and at Title I K-5 schools to 23:1. This reduction would save approximately \$485,825 and reduce staff by 7.5 full time employees.

- Reducing non-core teacher support in K-5 physical education, health, art and music to match staff reductions. This reduction would save approximately \$88,640 and would reduce staff by 1.8 full time employees.

- Reduce non-load bearing building teacher support in grades 6-12. This reduction would save approximately \$34,100 and would reduce staff by .6 full time employees.

- Reduce aide days from 179 to 169 days to match student attendance minus five days. Classroom or instructional aides would be required to be in school less days. During discussion Moore and Reschke indicated the district would prefer to cut developmental days where students are not in school. The reduction would save approximately \$158,000, but would not impact staff size.

- Eliminate General Fund money for extra curricular clubs and intramural. Only service clubs would remain, but groups like Future Problem Solvers and language clubs would be cut. This reduction would save approximately \$192,206 and club sponsors would be paid by student fees.

- Energy saving plans that would change maintenance staff schedules and would save approximately \$220,100.

- Reducing allocations for health insurance premiums to save approximately \$200,000.

Reschke indicated that some staff reductions could be balanced by retirements, but there was still a probability of delivering pink slips to teachers throughout the district.

Roberts also stated that additional income from OSMTech open enrollment would help, but that cuts need to be made before that enrollment is known.



'Please keep in mind that the process of reducing future spending this year by \$2 million doesn't balance the budget and should be seen as a temporary fix by this board and administration.'

**Dr. Al Roberts
Superintendent
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Attempted robbery at Sashabaw bank

On the evening of April 10, a man attempting to rob an Independence Township bank by giving a teller a note, fled without any money before police arrived.

At around 6:57 p.m., deputies from the Independence Township substation responded to a call for a possible armed robbery at Clarkston State Bank on Sashabaw Road.

According to a press release from Undersheriff Michael McCabe's office, the man entered the bank handing the teller a note. The note stated, "I have a gun and I will kill you." The suspect demanded \$100, \$50 and \$20's.

After demanding the money, customers continued to

enter the bank, so the suspect grabbed his note and fled the bank without any money, stated the release.

Det. Tim Hein, who responded to the scene, said the man was described as 6'0", 185-200 pound, white male in his late 40's. The suspect wore a baseball cap with a pin, sunglasses and a hooded gray sweatshirt.

No weapon was seen, but implied in the written note.

The man fled from the bank on foot and escaped. Hein said something spooked the man, causing him to run.

Anyone with information regarding the incident should call 1-888-TURN-1-IN (1-888-887-6146). *-By James Martinez, staff writer*



Lions on the donation prowl

The Clarkston Lions Club have been busy Philanthropists over the past few weeks. Recently, the club donated \$500 to the Independence Township Library and donated \$360 to Offering Alternative Therapy with Smiles (OATS). The money donated to the library is intended to be used to purchase items helpful to residents who are sight impaired. (Below) Lions Club members Chris Savage (left) and Jan Hodge (right) present head librarian Julia Merideth with a check. (Above, left to right) Savage, OATS director Nancy Heussner, Hodge and Lions Club President Brace Case. The Lions' donation will support OATS' therapeutic horseback riding program. The Lions Club is gearing up for White Cane Week which runs from April 28-May 6. *Photos provided*

Orco rezoning April 27

BY JENNY MATTESON
Clarkston News Editor

A sigh of resignation passed through the packed board room as the Independence Township Board of Trustees closed the public hearing at 10 p.m. on Orco Investments residential development proposal - without anything new information presented, any decisions made or even a full presentation given.

The board decided to continue the public hearing on May 3, not long after the planning commission considers Orco's request to rezone the property for commercial development on April 27.

Orco Investments currently has two development proposals for the property located at the northwest corner

of Waldon and Sashabaw roads near the I-75 interchange before township officials.

The first is primarily commercial in nature and calls for a "big box" retailer like Wal-Mart, a Lowe's and a 100-room hotel.

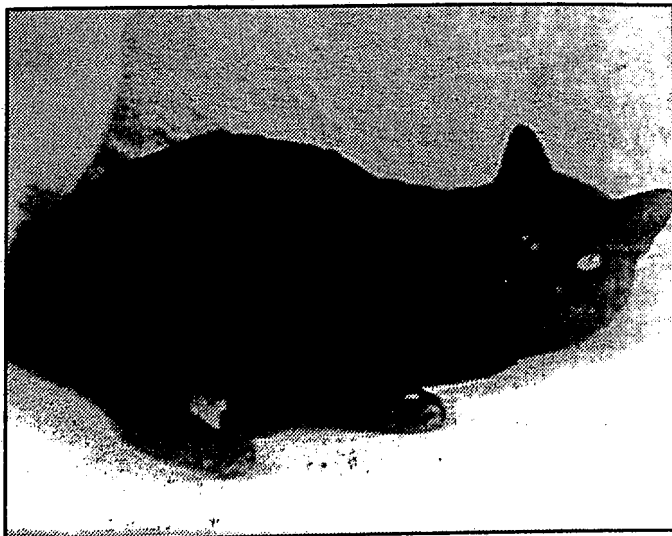
The second is a residential development listing 450 single-family homes, townhouses and condos on close to 65 acres. These numbers represent the latest version of the residential proposal, which began with a suggested 476-532 units. The plan also calls for around six acres of commercial development along the Sashabaw corridor.

At the April 4 board meeting, representatives from Orco

Please see Orco, page 26A



Pet of the Week



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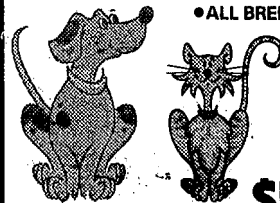


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More learning ahead

Lately I have been hearing voices. Conversations from the past and whispers from the future.

The conversations make me smile now, looking back over the year and seven months or so during which I penned close to 500 articles while working for *The Clarkston News*. They bring me comfort as I do not just start a new chapter in my life, I switch to a whole other medium.

The whispers might as well be a banshee scream for my stomach is currently host to the honeymoon of nervous and excited. Everyone knew the two were going to get married for years, they are so alike. I am just glad that my impending move to Japan on April 19 gave them a chance to get together.

I am moving to Japan, Osaka to be specific, to teach English, and as much as it hurts to leave behind the athletes, coaches and CHS on the whole, the opportunity is too great to pass on.

I have come a long way since becoming *The Clarkston News*' sports reporter in September of 2004. When Kyle Gargaro interviewed me, still a fresh graduate of Oakland University's journalism program, he asked me what experience I had covering sports.

"I like watching sports," I replied.

After they hired me, I was told my main competition for the job had been an individual who showed up for an interview in a t-shirt and NASCAR baseball cap.

Despite my impeccable credentials as a watcher of sports, the early days covering sports were awkward at times.

In the beginning I made sure to not only interview the coaches and players while covering a game, but also some of the fans. To this day, I still wonder who was more surprised: the poor parent who was just trying to watch their child play ball or Kyle as he cut the quotations from my story?

Like a man wearing underwear on his head at a black tie event, the awkward moments kept coming.

Within minutes of meeting Clarkston Athletic Director Dan Fife, he informed me of the massive turnover at the sports desk at my paper and shook my hand. I assured him that as I was the first full-time sports reporter I would be around for awhile. In comparison to the years he has put in coaching at Clarkston, my tenure was just a blip on the radar, but at least on the way out he shook my hand and smiled.

I have been privy to some astounding athletic performances while covering Clarkston High School, but I come away most impressed with the commitment that Fife's athletic department, the district as a whole and the community has for their athletes.

If I could cover CHS and live in Japan, I would jump at the opportunity. Taking photos would be somewhat tough though. If the *News* ever needs a Japanese correspondent though, they know who to e-mail.

After all my time asking vague, poorly conceived questions to CHS' coaches, I am now the one stammering. The simple question of "Why?" has me babbling like a varsity coach who just got asked: "What do you think the main reason the team reacted so well to the play of the other team today?"

When the process of applying to teach English in Japan began for me, I was asking myself "Why?" by the minute. I found my reasoning in advice given to one of my favorite authors, A.J. Liebling, by his father.

At the time, Liebling was considering quitting a career as a journalist and matriculating at the Sorbonne for a year.

Liebling wrote his father said "You are getting so interested in what you are doing that if you don't go now you never will. You might even get married."

As my tenure with *The Clarkston News* sets, I hold a heavy heart, for I loved my role there. Whether or not the experience in Japan can match the times I have had as a journalist remains to be seen, but a new day dawns for me on April 19 as I fly across the international date line and into the future.

For those of you who would like to keep up with my travels in Asia, please send me an email at nipurcell@gmail.com and I will keep you posted.

Started Out Dumb



Noah Purcell

Opinion

Orco presentation hits sour note with township residents

Meeting was laughable

Dear Editor,

The Independence Township Board meeting on April 4 would have been laughable except these guys from Orco were serious. They really acted like it made sense for our township to accept a site plan for houses that more than doubled the highest density housing we currently have in the township.

With straight faces they presented a site plan with 1,900 to 2,400 square foot houses with 2 car garages

on lots of 55 feet X 110 feet, or on their big lots which were 130 feet deep.

Also with straight faces they presented their 12 unit residential buildings. I've seen steel industrial buildings with more style than these.

None of them have any business being built in our township — and the frightening thing is that they are serious about building them.

We can't let that happen. The next important meeting is April 27.

Ed Santala, Independence Twp.

Birth of tract housing

Dear Editor,

Nice try, Orco Investments! I went to the meeting Tuesday night regarding the parcel of land on Sashabaw and Waldon roads along I-75.

The developer has been trying to develop this piece of land in such a way as to make the most profit possible from his investment without regard to the aesthetics of the community. The plan proposed reflects this.

The heavy density of single and multi-family homes and apartments proposed on this plan is an example of what lengths a developer will go to in order to make a buck. When the township refuses to go along, the

developer cries foul to the state. This kind of thing has been going on for years in other communities.

In the 50's and 60's, it happened in the suburbs surrounding Detroit. When the price of land became expensive, the developers complained that they could not profitably develop the land unless they had a variance, the developers then crammed as many identical homes as possible on a parcel, each with a 40-50 foot lot. Thus, the tract home was born.

The reason I think a lot of people moved to Clarkston was because it has a rural style of development with homes built on large lots. I don't think Clarkston needs to alter its master plan to accommodate developers who want to make a huge profit on a small parcel of land by proposing the type of plan we saw at Tuesday's meeting.

Vincent Rizzo
Independence Twp.

Letters to the Editor

Congratulations CHS Mock Trial Team

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to the Clarkston High School Mock Trial Team for a great performance by everyone at the State finals on March 25, 2006.

The Mock Trial Team could never have advanced

to the State finals without the effort and commitment by faculty advisors John Zittel and Peggy Marko and coaches Rob Novy and Greg Townsend. The sacrifices the faculty advisors and coaches made in freely

Please see Letters, page 17A

Small is big to the gov. when talking SBT money

Lee Iacocca is well known for his Chrysler auto commercial that read, "If you can find a better car, buy it!"

Politicians strive for slogans they can repeat over and over to get their message across.

Governor Jennifer Granholm has found such a phrase and pounds it to the point one can believe it precedes a greeting, is in her meal blessings and is recorded as her cell phone ring.

Ready? Here it is. "I will not raise taxes on families or gut education, health care and public safety to give tax breaks to big business."

She used it, of course, in vetoing the bill passed by the legislature that would have repealed the single business tax.

The Single Business Tax is, in fact, a tax on every business that grosses more than \$350,000 a year, whether it nets a profit or not.

While that figure may sound "big" to our governor and even many voters, it certainly is not a lot of money for a business to gross.

It probably includes every gas station in the state,

as well as party stores, restaurants, hotels, machine shops, several in the service industry, etc.

A business with a few employees has to take in more than that to even be in a profit position.

However, the way the governor uses, repeats and emphasizes the words "big business" it is meant to be interpreted as BIG BUSINESS!

We in business certainly don't refer to ourselves as big businesses, yet we pay the vast majority of the single business taxes collected by

the state.

We'd really like to have her definition of big business.

It won't work, but we'd like to have her make public that definition.

Should all the voters know how many of the hometown businesses pay this unfair tax perhaps she would find her slogan less appealing.

We think the voters would, too.

Guest Column

Jim Sherman, Sr.

A Look Back

At our community's history through the pages of The Clarkston News

15 YEARS AGO (1991)

• **Jury favors district in lawsuit ruling:** The Clarkston school district emerged as the clear winner when the jury returned its verdict in a \$3 million lawsuit filed against the district by architect Charles W. Sherman and Associates, Inc.

Though the Oakland County Circuit Court jury determined the district should pay the firm approximately \$166,000 for various expenses and services, the panel ruled in favor of the district on the "tortuous interference" claim, a key element of the suit.

• **Trailer mishap claims a life:** A 74-year-old Independence Township man died last week after a travel trailer pinned him at his home.

Francis J. Rose, of Lakeview Drive, was pinned under his 16-foot trailer April 8 while changing the tires. Apparently, the jack slipped, trapping the retired Detroit police officer.

25 YEARS AGO (1981)

• **Administrators offer to take less:** Six Clarkston schools administrators have stepped forward with offers to take reductions in salary increases for the 1981-82 school year.

• **Fight goes on:** Independence Township scoffs at court battle fatigue when it comes to adult foster care homes and enforcement of local zoning laws.

After months of skirmishes, the township lost its bid to prevent an adult foster care home, and in February Oakland County Circuit Court Judge James S. Thorburn allowed six developmentally disabled adults to move into Lake Oakland Woods subdivision.

50 YEARS AGO (1956)

• **Juniors Present "Cheaper By The Dozen":** The Juniors of Clarkston High School will present "Cheaper by the Dozen" in the school auditorium on Thursday and Friday evenings, April 12 and 13.

• **Open House At The Clarkston News:** Next week The Clarkston News which is 27½ years old, will start its 24th year with the present publisher. In recognition of this fact and to acquaint subscribers and friends with the new location, 5818 M-15, The Clarkston News will hold "open house" on Friday afternoon, April 20 from 1:00 until 5:00 o'clock.

• **Scout Cookie Sale A Big Success:** Mrs. Donald Redmond, cookie sale chairman for the North Oakland Girl Scout Council, is already thanking the communities this week for the splendid response to this year's Cookie Sale, although it does not end until April 16.

Don on international current events

Some folks have a low tolerance for Buick-driving blue heads (for those not in the know, blue heads refer to those whose hair is a bluish-tinted gray). And, there are still others who get red-faced by the antics of pampered, postpubescent pukers who give little and expect all.

Where you are on Don's highly scientific *No Patience Chart* usually is based on whether or not, or how close, you are to either blue heads or postpubescent pukers.

I am the quintessential All-American Ambivalent Male (AAAM, for short). I base this lackadaisical stance of the generations on the fact I am equally close to blue heads as to postpubescent pukers. Hmmmmmm? Upon further introspection, my ambivalence must also have roots in this: The face I see in my mirror every morning sports an ever-graying beard. Despite said graying beard and achy body parts, some still insist my inner-child leads to sophomore tendencies, ergo immature ways. That last part really sucks.



don
rush
don't rush
me

Go figure.

All this leads up to... were I French, I would not be a member of the AFAMS (All-French Ambivalent Male Société). Were I a French male, beside having an affinity for long walks in the moonlight, thin cigarettes, cheese and wine, I would hate both the old AND the young -- uhm -- males. (It's a scientific fact genetically speaking, French males can only love women. They may hate to love them, but, regardless of age, French Male DNA demands femina amor -- love of women. That "fact" was gleaned from the pages of the very comprehensive and thoroughly researched, *Don Rush's Compilation of Knowledge of All Things Great and Small*, so it must be true.)

Yep, just like soft, orange cheese in a can, I would be whizzed off at those males at either end of their prospective life-cycle.

I'd be angry at the million or so protesters (mostly

young men) closing down and clogging up the country because they didn't like proposed new labor legislation that would grant French employers a wee bit more freedom to fire any employee under the age of 26 for up to two years after being hired.

All this protesting would really put the damper on romantic walks in the moonlight by the Eiffel Tower. What gal wants to be wooed while a bunch of whiney unemployed dudes are running around the streets causing undo pessimism, fear and anxiety?

I think I'd shout, "GET A JOB! But, don't look for one in Michigan, cause it sucks there, too."

Here in Michigan, unemployment is high -- at about 6.6 percent. However, I read unemployment in France is about 10 percent. Worse for the younguns where one in four French pampered, postpubescent youth is without work. The irony of it is the French have high unemployment even though their blue headed politicians have essentially guaranteed French citizenry employment for life via weak-kneed and shortsighted legislation.

Were I a middle-aged French male, while I'd be upset with the guys coming up the rear, I'd be furious with those fat cats sitting in Parliament. (By the way, how can you have a Prime Minister and a President in the same country, as in France, and hope to get anything done?)

The whole French experiment of socialistic-democracy and cradle to grave care from the government seems to have cause France's problems. Those problems can be laid on the laps of old-European politicians. Were I a French male columnist, I might write, "Off with their blue heads!"

Nah, I probably wouldn't write that in light of how busy French guillotines were a couple of centuries ago, and how much more busy they would be now.

I guess I am not cut out to be a French guy. I reckon I'll be content as an AAAM. But, I do predict before it is all said and done, the United States will get a glut of young French men, green cards in hand, seeking work Americans won't do. So, men -- watch out for your wives.

Comments on the sophisticated Rush can be e-mailed to: donrushmedon@charter.net

Some signs of Spring interesting, believable

First of all, forget anything you've heard or read about sighting the first robin having any meaning when it comes to Spring. Several showed their red breasts in my yard when there was a couple inches of snow on the ground.

They must just get an urge to fly north, you know, like snowbirds who have to fly south in October when the colors are so great up here. Both groups are failed forecasters.

Here are eight signs of Spring that are refreshing, if not always true:

- When the birds stop singing and your shutters start swinging, a storm is near.
- If a thunderstorm occurs before 7 a.m. in April or May, we're in for a wet summer.
- When the noon flies bite, rain is in sight.
- When the leaves on the trees turn their backs to the west, a storm is just around the corner.

• Red skies at night, the next day is a delight.

• Red skies in the morning, a storm's in the warning.

• When the bees leave the flower patch, the rains are a comin'.

• When the hornets fly after sunset, the rainstorm will not come as an upset.

And, deer will eat anything green in the Spring.

Rabbits are happy to taste anything new and tender looking this time of year. Squirrels and chipmunks will avoid daffodils, but will go for a tulip, lily or crocus bulb.

Moles, voles, mice and groundhogs are actively seeking roots of succulent plants.

And, it's almost impossible to barrier-out these enemies of growth, just like trying to stop development.

--- 0 ---

Know what some athletes get when they drive slowly through a campus? A diploma.

The difference between a taxidermist and a tax collector? Taxidermists take only our skin.

--- 0 ---

Now I'd like to pass this along because it was passed to me and I'd like to get rid of it. "By following this simple advice you may find inner peace. Simply finish all the things you've started and hadn't finished. Just finish your opened bottles of vodka, wine, Scotch, Valium, box of chocolates and the beers left in the fridge."

You have no idea how good I felt. Excuse me, how good you'll feel with your inner peace.

--- 0 ---

Rasheed Wallace is a 6'11" forward for the Detroit Pistons. You may not be a Pistons fan, but if you're a mother, you could still enjoy this item.

Rasheed has more technical fouls than any other professional basketball player this year. The calls are mostly for what comes out of his mouth when angered.

He also has his own lexicon. In a postgame interview earlier this month with Trevor Thompson Rasheed referred to the NBA championship as a "ship."

That prompted a studio anchor to apologize on air for an expletive that Fox Sports News thought Rasheed said, which rhymed with ship.

The Federal Communications Commission can impose heavy fines on those airing profanity.

Well, Jackie Wallace, Rasheed's mom, watched the exchange on tv and was not happy. "C'mon, Rasheed said ship, not that other word!" Jackie said.

Adding, "I was watching at home and I couldn't believe anyone thought he swore. Believe me, when Rasheed starts using profanity, you'll know. My baby isn't shy when he swears."

6'11" and over 250 pounds, but he's still her baby.

Jim's Jottings



Jim Sherman

Let us know your opinion at shermanpub@aol.com. Attn: CNews

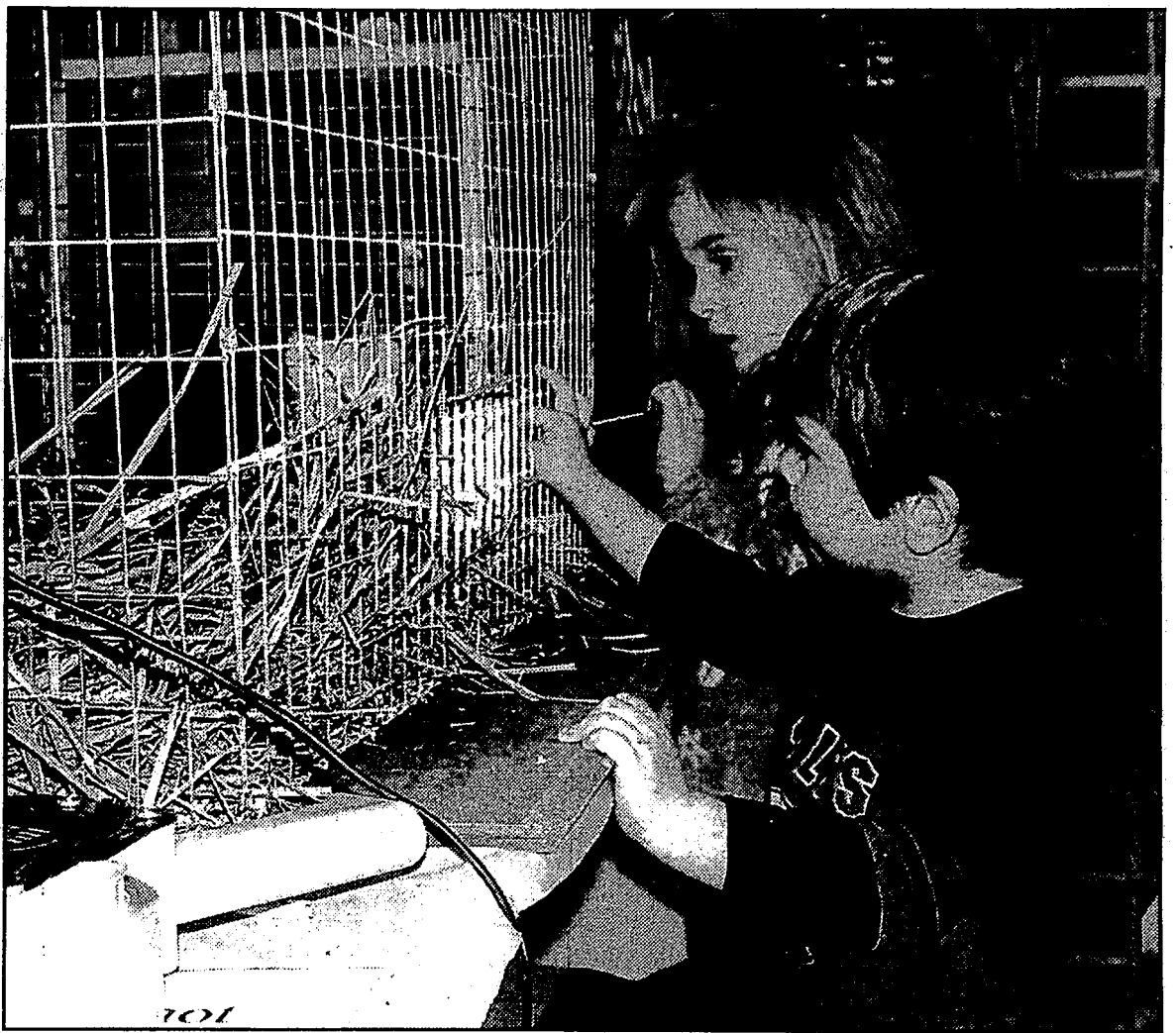
Egg Mania ensues



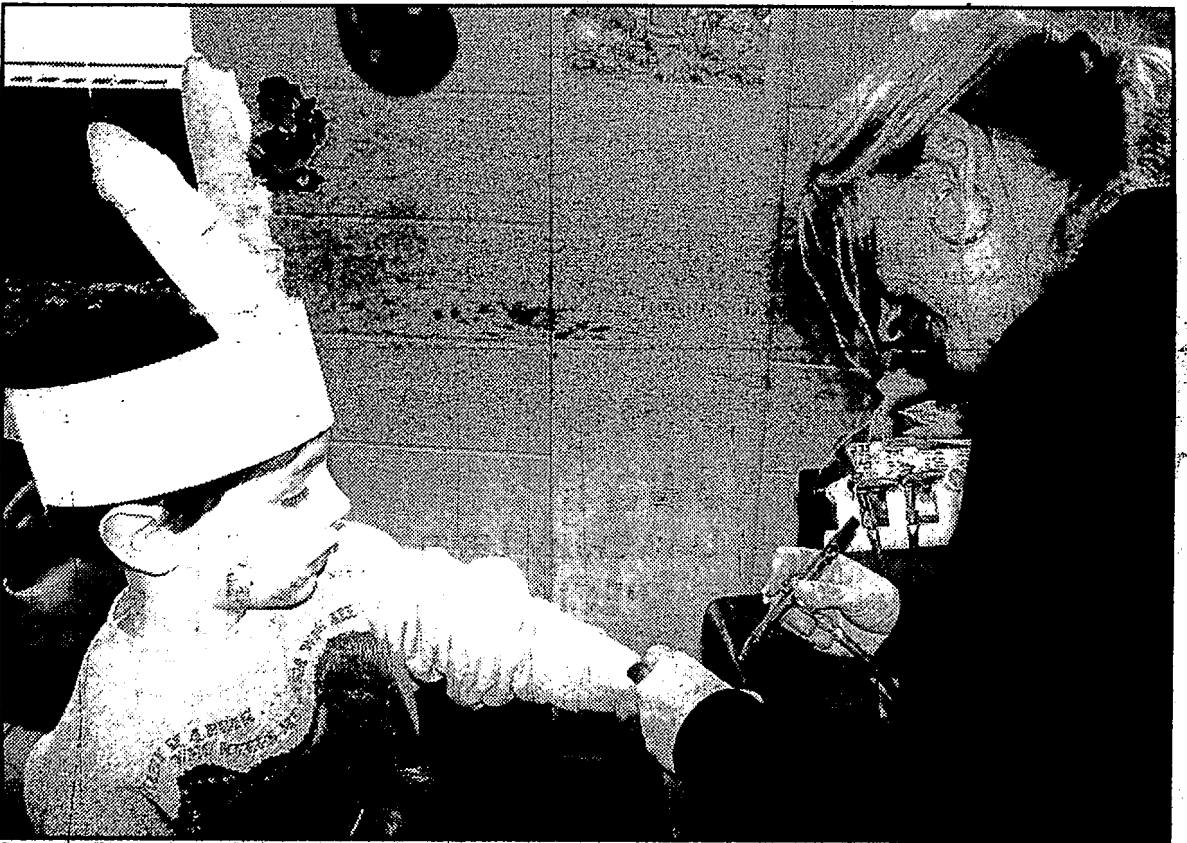
Above: Jackie Mason (left) and Erika Knieper pose with the bunny of the hour at Egg Mania.

Photos by Noah Purcell

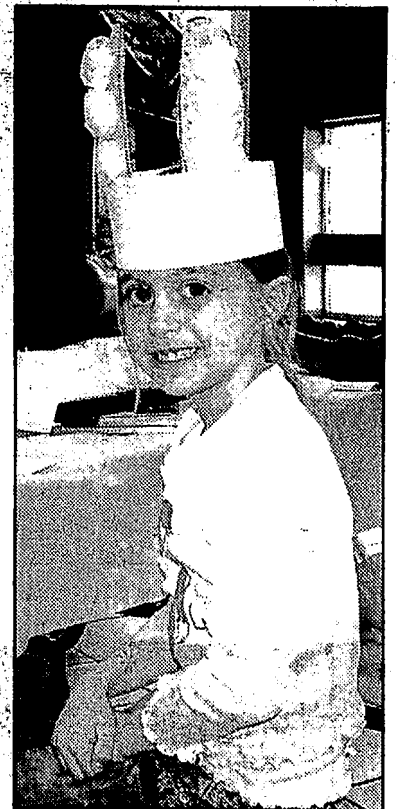
Below: The flashlight egg hunt in the Clarkston High School gym led to big smiles and full baskets for (left to right) Jacob DeBoer, Clay DeBoer, Dana Demrose, Nickolas DeBoer and Kendra Demrose. The Clarkston Lions Club set up the hunt.



Elizabeth and David Brouns feed an Easter Bunny in training at Egg Mania's live animal station after checking out the new born chicks.



Lewyn Beemink gets a festive design to help remember Egg Mania by.



Ivie Adoglu shows off her freshly made rabbit ears.

Police and Fire

Independence Township

April 3: Two sets of wireless headphones, remote control, tow strap and Kodak camera stolen from car on Hillcrest between dusk and 11 p.m. A TV and DVD player were left untouched.

Unknown suspects entered the club house at the apartment complex on Lancaster Hill Drive and damaged a wooden chair and floor lamp, making a mess of the area between 3:20 a.m. and 8 a.m.

Home invasion on Wyngate Drive overnight resulting in \$2,500 being stolen.

First degree home invasion on Clarkston Road overnight.

April 4: Employee at business on Gateway Park Drive claims the store has received numerous harassing phone calls since Dec. 7. The employee alleges the calls are made by the boyfriend of an employee who was recently fired. According to reports following a previous incident since December, the man was contacted by police and told not to call back.

Domestic assault on Foxcreek East around 1 a.m. during a dispute between a husband and wife. Allegedly, the husband hit the woman on the chest, grabbed the phone from her hand as she threatened to call police and threw it to the ground. He also reportedly ripped another phone cord from the wall. The 25-year-old man was gone when police arrived.

The case is open pending prosecutor's review.

April 5: An employee of Sunrise Senior Living on Water Tower Place reported credit cards stolen from her purse.

38-year-old Macomb Township man arrested for operating his vehicle while intoxicated on northbound Dixie Highway south of I-75. Breath tests showed the man's blood alcohol level to be .17.

April 6: Parview Drive apartment residents reported threatening calls from a caller they believe to be a 15-year-old acquaintance from Pontiac. They reported threats following a call on April 5 at around midnight, but said several calls were made prior to the last incident.

April 7: Saxophone stolen from a classroom in Sashabaw Middle School on March 23.

April 8: Heroin and marijuana were found on a 20-year-old Clarkston woman following a traffic stop on Coulter Lake Boulevard. The incident remains under investigation.

A 31-year-old Waterford man suffered serious injuries in a one car accident on Sashabaw Road and was transported by the Independence Township Fire Department to Genesys Hospital in Grand Blanc. The accident occurred around 11:50 p.m. when the man's 2001 Chevy Venture, driving south, left the roadway, struck a tree and rolled over before coming to rest against a second tree. According to the police report, alcohol was not a factor.

April 9: Police received a complaint regarding three juveniles on Elkrun Drive harassing geese. One of the youth admitted to shooting a goose and missing another. He also told police another kid shot two other smaller birds. A dead goose was located in a pond and the Department of Natural Resources was notified and are investigating the complaint.

There were nine separate reports of damaged solar lights from residents on Morningmist, Deerwood, Fawn Valley and Elkrun. One resident saw kids running from his home around 3 a.m. Many of the lights appear to have been smashed by an object, according to reports.

A 19-year-old Waterford Hill Terrace resident was arrested for operating his motor vehicle while intoxicated after police pulled him over as he drove along the sidewalk along Maybee Road. The man was also cited for having three cans of beer, two of which were open. The incident took place around 12:42 a.m. and the golf cart was impounded.

graphing calculator and watch.

April 6: Davisburg woman alleges she was assaulted on April 2 around 12:30 a.m. by an 18-year-old Davisburg woman and her boyfriend in her home.

Graham Road resident called police after she spooked an apparent thief going through two unlocked vehicles at the house. The male suspect was dressed in black with a hood. A radar detector and radio were stolen.

April 7: 21-year-old Highland Township man cited for disorderly loitering after he was found passed out in his damaged vehicle at 8:04 a.m. in the rear parking lot of Springfield Elementary on Davisburg Road.

Deputy found a chain saw in the fast

Please see Police on page 15A

Larcenies at Park 'n Ride

On April 4, the center caps for wheels on three vehicles were stolen at the Park 'n Ride on Sashabaw Road near I-75.

The incidents on two of the vehicles took place between 6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., according to police reports. The center caps were stolen from an Envoy and Denali.

The center caps from a pickup truck were also stolen.

Springfield Township

April 3: Three vehicles were broken into on Norman Road. Two of the vehicles were entered by breaking out the passenger side vent windows and one car was unlocked. Stolen items include a checkbook, MP3 player, CD player,

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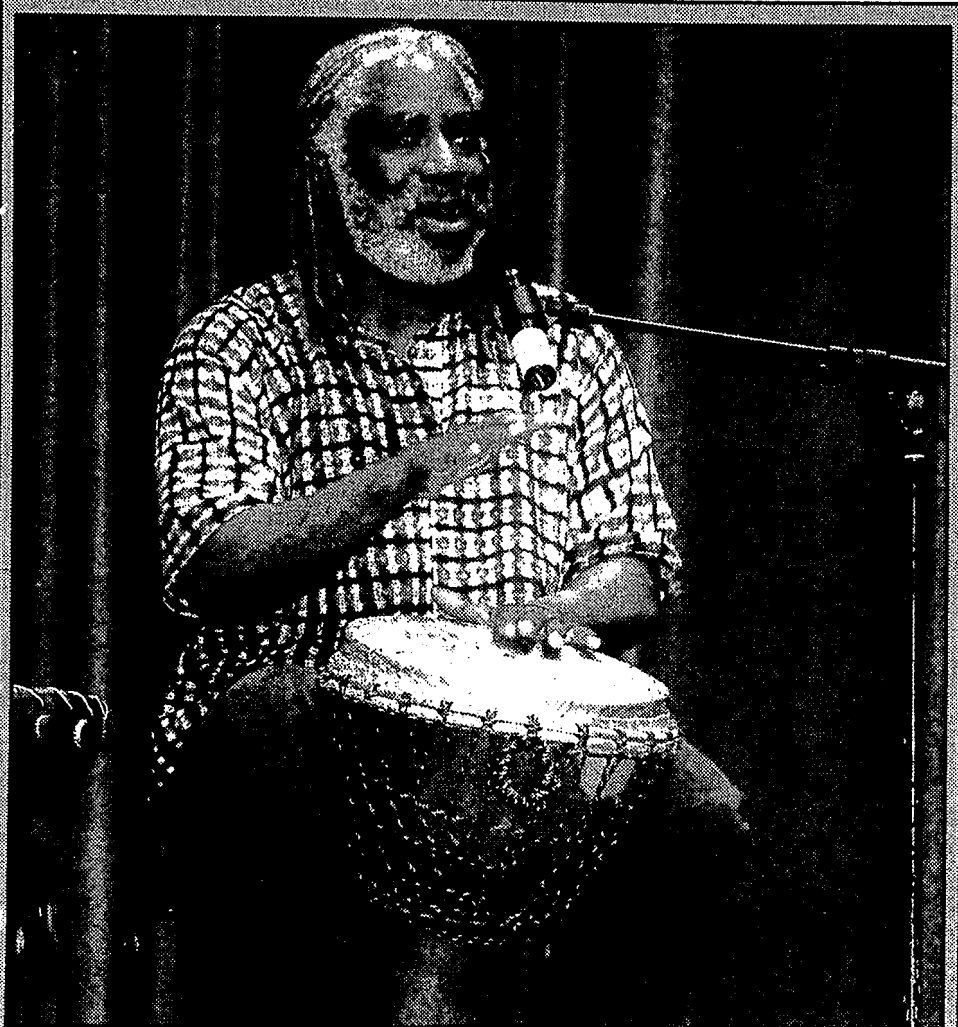


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Thanks for all that you do...

Volunteers of all ages received a great big "Thank You" at the second annual Community Volunteer Recognition Night on April 5.

Around two dozen volunteers came together in the Clarkston High School Auditorium to listen as keynote speaker LaRon Williams, from Ann Arbor, spoke on diversity, acceptance, kindness and generosity. Williams used a mixture of African storytelling, music and drama to send his message.

The evening also included a slide

show of images from throughout the year and brief messages from Clarkston Area Chamber of Commerce Director Penny Shanks and Clarkston Schools Communications Director Anita Banach.

The evening ended with refreshments and time for social gathering.

The Community Volunteer Night is a joint effort of the Chamber of Commerce and Clarkston Schools. Sponsors for the evening were T&C Federal Credit Union and Sunrise Assisted Living.

Fuel spilled, site cleaned in Independence Twp.

BY JAMES MARTINEZ
Clarkston News Staff Writer

Last week, a Clintonville Road resident smelled deisel fuel in his yard and the surrounding area. A day after he noticed an oil-like substance in the same ditch — triggering a call to police and discovery of an estimated 20-50 gallons of spilled deisel fuel.

The spill occurred at a construction site in Independence Township on Clintonville Road near Waldon Road. According to police reports, the spill occurred on April 5 at 9 a.m., a day before the resident called authorities around 5 p.m.

The Department of Environmental Quality arrived to help the North Oakland County Hazmat Team and Independence Township Fire Department clean the site. According to Engineer Paramedic Gary Sharp of the fire department, the site was clean as of April 6.

"It was such a small amount, we don't believe it was a hazard," said Sharp, who noted no evacuation was needed due to the spill.

"The Health Department may test some of the wells in the area on Clintonville Road for the residents as a precaution," added Sharp. "If people have questions they can call the fire department."

According to Sharp, special pads for absorbing fuel were placed in the stream and the contaminated soil was

being removed.

"The DEQ is satisfied with cleanup and don't recommend anything further," said Lt. Dale LaBair of the Oakland County Sheriff's Department Independence Township substation.

Referring to initial reports that stated approximately 100 gallons spilled, LaBair said the "spill is not as great as they initially thought," agreeing it was probably closer to the 25 gallons estimated by a construction worker on site.

Reports state the sheriff's deputies assisted firefighters in tracing the spill to a site managed by a construction where another completed ground work.

The investigation revealed a large pile of dirt saturated with diesel fuel as the source for the contamination. As stated in reports, the spill occurred as a worker moved one of two fuel tanks. During the process, a hose to the other fuel tank was accidentally severed and went unnoticed for about 10 minutes.

The worker on site then attempted to clean up the site by digging up the affected soil with an excavator and piling it above ground.

According to reports, the area is being "dewatered" via pumps and being discharged into a nearby river. The spill appears to have spread even though the pumps were shut down following discovery of the spill.

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Ellis Barn to have Heirloom Garden

BY JAMES MARTINEZ
Clarkston News Staff Writer

Besides seeing the historic Ellis Barn when traveling to Springfield Oaks County Park, future visitors will see plants who thrived when the barn stood near Dixie Highway in the late 19th century.

The Master Gardeners through Michigan State Extension and the 4H Gardeners Restore Our World Club (GROW) worked together the last few months to plan a 30-by-30 foot heirloom garden to be put near the barn.

"The Heirloom Garden is using plants that are older. In this case with the Ellis Barn, we'll be putting in plants common in the 1880's," said Carol Lenchek, Environmental Programs Coordinator with Oakland County MSU Extension.

"I thought it would be nice to put a garden there that reflected the plants grown at that time," said Lenchek, who came up the idea about a year ago.

Lenchek listed the criteria to be a heirloom plant are:

- Plants must be 50 years old.
- Plants grow "true to seed."
- Plants have a traceable history of its own.

According to Lenchek, the groups hope to grow samples of the plantings in whiskey barrels as a preview of the future garden this summer for the 4-H fair in July.

"We're not just talking about rows and tracks of plants," said Lenchek. "It's more of a landscape than a garden. It will take time."

Some obstacles before the garden

can be implemented include waiting for the move of a historic house, approval of procedures through Oakland County Parks and the kids need to research the plants for the garden, explained Lenchek.

Elisabeth Maurer, 16, of White Lake, a member of GROW, looks at the garden as an opportunity to learn a wide range of skills including time management, gardening and communication with the press.

"I've learned a lot about garden design and styles... You also get to meet new people enjoy the experience and say 'Hey, I helped make that happen,'" said Maurer.

Lenchek concurred, saying the children would learn researching different gardening techniques in addition to antique plants, dealing with deer problems, public speaking and government operations.

Both Maurer and Lenchek expressed the need for volunteers and donations of supplies and money. Currently, GROW has approximately six members and welcomes children ages 5 - 19.

As stated in a flier Maurer presented at the Community Expo on April 1, the garden needs time, manual labor and supplies. A vehicle is also needed to transport compost and the soil of the garden beds need preparation.

For more information or to help with donations, call Elisabeth Maurer at 248-342-2563, Heather McAtee of MSU extension at 248-858-0892, or Carol Lenchek at 248-858-0900.



Elisabeth Maurer sits on a pile of rocks near Ellis Barn in Springfield Oaks County Park where a heirloom garden is planned for the future. Photo by James Martinez

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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 2006
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 American Legion-Lapeer Post #16
 1701 W. Genesee St. (M-21)
 Lapeer, MI

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2006
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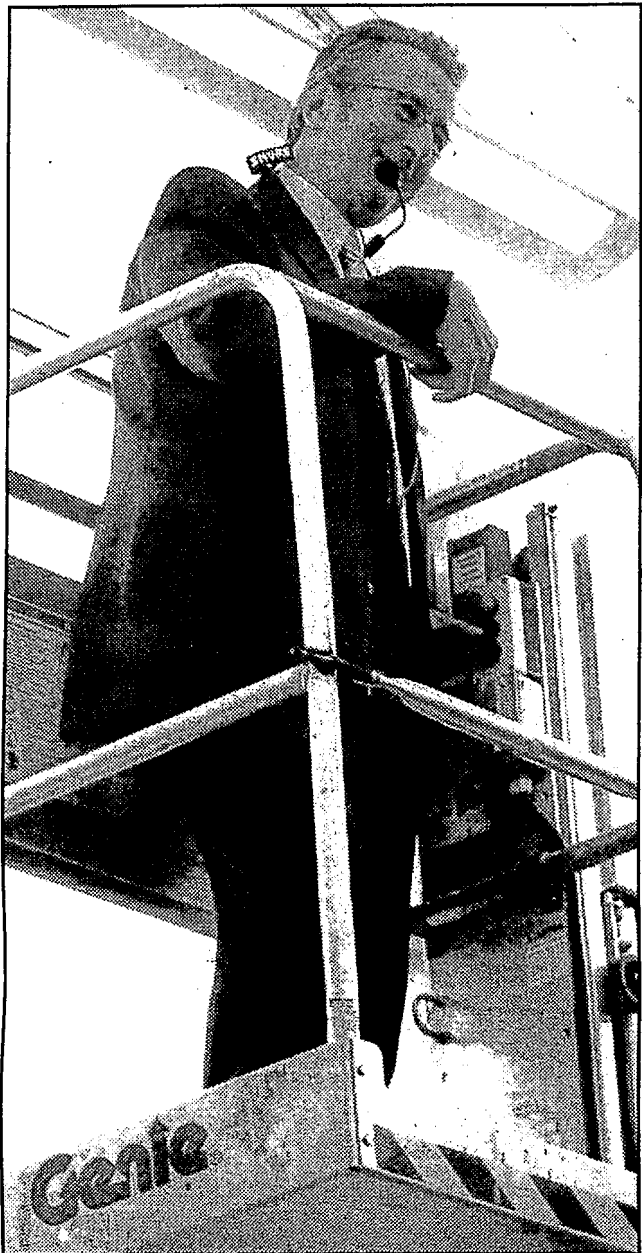
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Book bugs bite at Bailey Lake



BLE Interim Principal John Diliiegghio agreed to read to the school from high in the air if the students read a lot during March. With BLE students submitting over 396,829 minutes of reading during the month, Diliiegghio was raised so high he almost bumped the cafeteria's ceiling. Photos by Andrew DuPont



Students at Bailey Lake were rewarded for a successful March is Reading Month on April 3 with a special assembly. Pictured, Carra Cadreau, media specialist, and Blagica Taseski, fourth grade teacher, performed a book bugs skit for students and rewarded the top readers in every class.

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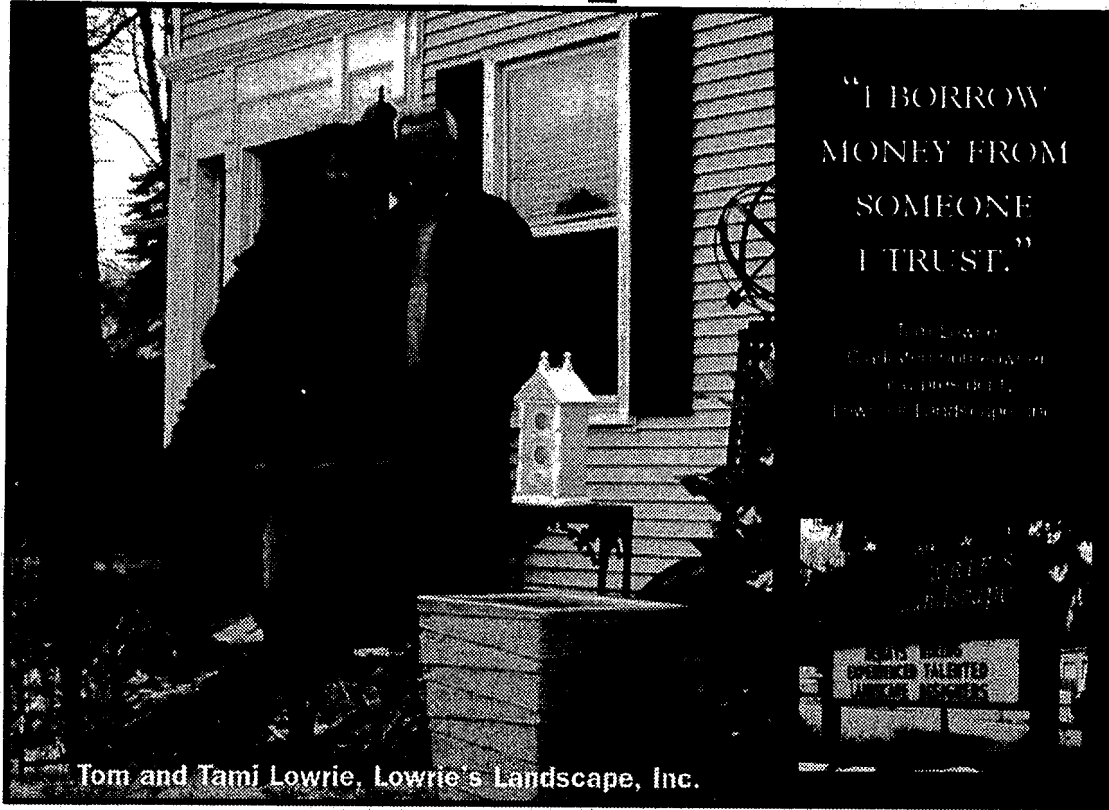
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In the April 5 edition of *The Clarkston News*, the wrong photo accompanied the story entitled "Students, Optimists look forward to bright future" for the girl winners. Pictured above is the correct photo of the Clarkston Optimists Club girl winners (left-right) Nicole Otenbaker, Ellyn Gray and Erin Gray. Photo provided.



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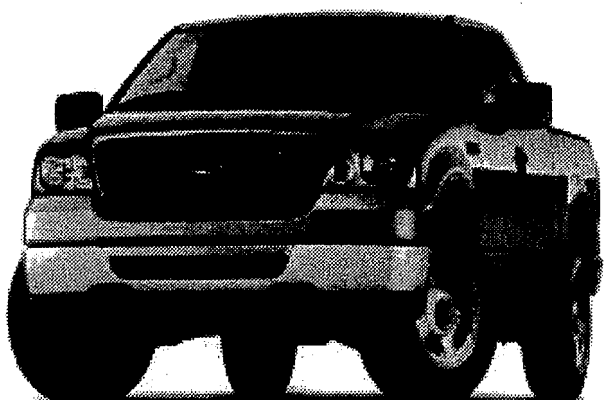
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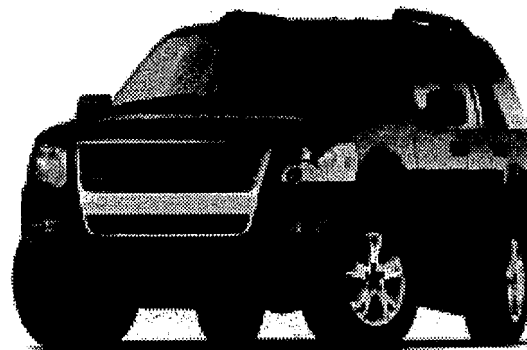
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Discolored Paper

Police

Continued from page 9A
lane on northbound Dixie Highway near Davisburg Road.

April 8: Police found a 20-year-old Davisburg man and 19-year-old Holly man riding motorcycles damaging baseball fields on Dilley Road. The men were advised to call Springfield Twp. offices.

Man escapes from police

A 23-year-old Clarkston man, suspected of driving his vehicle drunk, escaped on foot as an Oakland County Sheriff's deputy went to his patrol car for a P.B.T on April 7 around 3 a.m.

The officer chased the man on foot trying to tackle him. During pursuit the officer tripped injuring his knee. Police reports state the foot pursuit lasted about three tenths of a mile.

According to reports, the vehicle was pulled over on W. Church after the driver appeared to cut through Rudy's parking lot from Main Street to allegedly skip the traffic light.

Lieutenant Dale LaBair of the Oakland County Sheriff's Department confirmed the man turned himself in April 7, but

he has not been arrested. An arrest warrant was sent to the prosecutor's office on charges of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated and obstructing a police officer, said LaBair.

The deputy drove himself to North Oakland Medical Center and received three stitches. The suspect's vehicle was impounded.

LaBair confirmed the man had a previous driving while impaired offense in March 2004.



Williams' exam adjourned

The April 3 preliminary exam of Richard Edward Williams, former Oakland County director of community and minority affairs, in 52-2 District Court was adjourned to April 25.

According to Matt Roth of the Oakland County Prosecutor's office, the adjournment was needed for further discovery and to allow all parties involved "to get their ducks in a row." Roth said such a long delay was not needed, but scheduling conflicts came up making April 25 the first date available for all parties involved.

Williams, 54, was arraigned on March 21 before Judge Dana Fortinberry in 52-2 District Court on six counts of criminal sexual conduct against a teenage girl. The charges included two counts of first degree criminal sexual conduct, which are life felonies; three counts of criminal sexual conduct, second degree, and one count of fourth degree criminal sexual conduct.

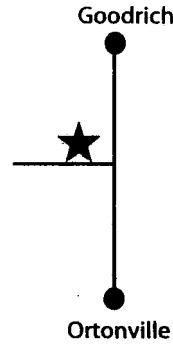
The alleged offenses took place in Independence Township from the summer of 2001 through November 2005.

- JAMES MARTINEZ

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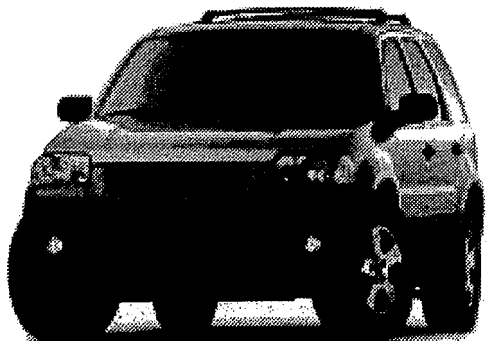
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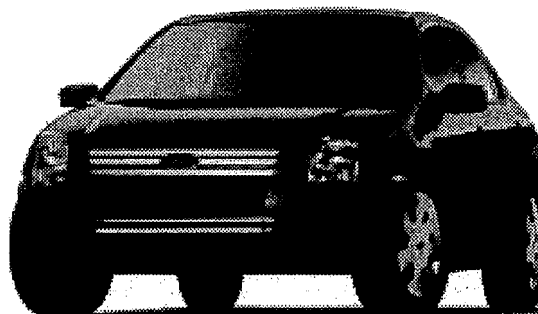
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Police

Continued from page 9A
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Williams' e

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Bus driver becomes good samaritan for injured owl

BY ANDREW DUPONT
Clarkston News Staff Writer

One Clarkston School bus driver could not ignore an animal in need.

After finding an injured owl, Colleen MacLeod sought out co-workers and used everything at her disposal to give the animal a chance. Though the animal was beyond recovery, MacLeod said she could not leave an animal to suffer.

On April 4, while driving her morning route, MacLeod saw what she thought was an owl on the side of Sashabaw road near I-75. MacLeod said she was caught by surprise because she would not expect to see a nocturnal animal around during the day on a busy road.

After transporting her children to school, she headed back the way she came and saw the owl was still there. Having more time, MacLeod took a closer look at the animal.

She discovered the great-horned owl was alive, but severely injured and unable to fly. MacLeod said she has an affinity for birds and would not feel right leaving the owl there. She even named the owl "Buster."

"He would have gotten mauled or eaten because he couldn't fly," MacLeod said.

MacLeod said she tried to approach the owl, but it moved away from her, trying to scurry into the woods. Not wanting to scare the bird away, MacLeod said she returned to the bus garage and recruited additional help.

Transportation Dispatch Anne Curry and Bus Aide/Office Clerk Vicki Wisner joined MacLeod and returned to the scene. Before returning, Curry secured a large blanket and MacLeod emptied a large cardboard box for transportation.

Even though they were trying to help, Buster was not pleased to be near them. Curry said she was nervous approaching the animal, and that Buster was clearly ready to defend himself.

"The big talon claws were a big concern to me," Curry said.

MacLeod said the three women surrounded the owl, and when they tried to throw the blanket over him,

Buster fell onto his back and fought.

"He clawed at the blanket," MacLeod said, adding they were able to lift him up and place him inside the cardboard box.

They transported Buster to Advanced Pet Care on Sashabaw Road, who offered to transport the bird to a specialist in Birmingham.

Sadly, Dr. Jim Mangner, the veterinarian who received Buster, said the owls' injuries were too serious for him to recover, and Buster was put to sleep.

"If I know in my heart it's not going to heal, I just don't want to see him suffer," Mangner said.

He could only speculate as to the cause of Buster's injuries - head trauma, severe ocular damage and a broken wing - saying he could have been hit by a car or shot.

Regardless, Mangner said the damage to Buster's wing would likely cause gangrene, his health would only deteriorate further and he would be in a lot of pain, leaving euthanasia as the only humane option.

Though saddened by the end result, MacLeod said she is not discouraged.

"I feel really bad about it, but we did the best we could do," MacLeod said. "If I needed to do it again, I would."

'He would have gotten mauled or eaten because he couldn't fly.'

**- Colleen MacLeod
Clarkston School bus driver
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'Project Sticker Shock' raises alcohol awareness

BY JAMES MARTINEZ

Clarkston News Staff Writer

Adults penalized for purchasing alcohol for minors in the Clarkston area will not be able to say they did not know what was coming.

On April 4 and 6, nearly 20 students from the CHS SADD club visited many area retailers to place bright orange stickers on alcohol and wine products. The stickers warn adults that buying minors alcohol is a crime punishable by a \$1,000 fine and up to 60 days in jail.

The Clarkston Coalition for Youth, the Clarkston High School SADD Club, the Oakland County Sheriff's Department and Independence Township Fire Department implemented "Project Sticker Shock" last week in Clarkston.

"We want to make sure that people are just aware because sometimes there's a misconception that it's okay, under social norms, to provide alcohol to minors. We want to educate everyone on the laws and take them aware you have to be 21 to consume alcohol," said The Clarkston Coalition for Youth President Kelly Hyer.

"(The kids) love doing it and felt like they were making a difference and that adults would make

note of the stickers," said CHS teacher and SADD Advisor Trisha Carter.

With spring break trips and graduation approaching, Carter said the campaign could not have come at a better time.

"I'm very proud of

these kids. I'm thrilled it's a message they continue to support and spread throughout the Clarkston community," added Carter.

Students were accompanied by chaperones to stores at times of mutual

convenience for all parties involved.

The groups worked as part of the Alliance of Coalitions for Healthy Communities (ACHD) which is a group of community members from 15 coalitions and more than 20 cit-

ies in Oakland County and was supported by Oakland County Prosecuting Attorney David Gorcyca.

Sergeant Paul Bidinger of the Oakland County Sheriff's Department said many of the businesses were receptive,

but not all were as receptive as he would have liked.

"I hope it heightens awareness of alcohol abuse and the consequences of providing alcohol to people under 21," said Bidinger.



These Clarkston High students hit the streets to help spread the word that buying alcohol for minors is illegal and carries penalties of a \$1,000 fine and up to 60 days in jail. Photo provided



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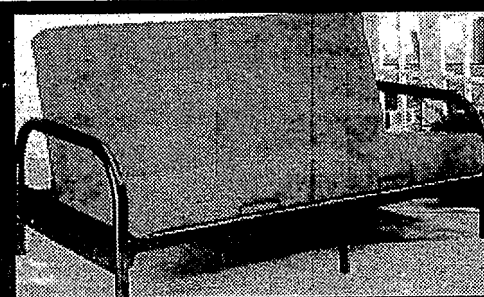
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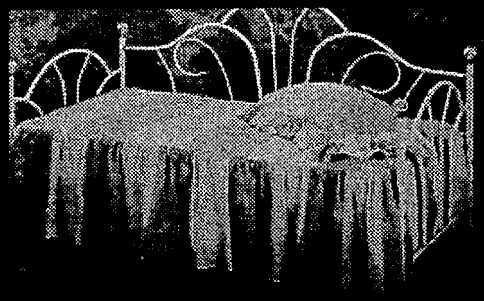
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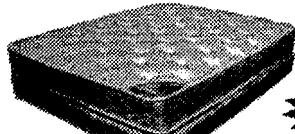
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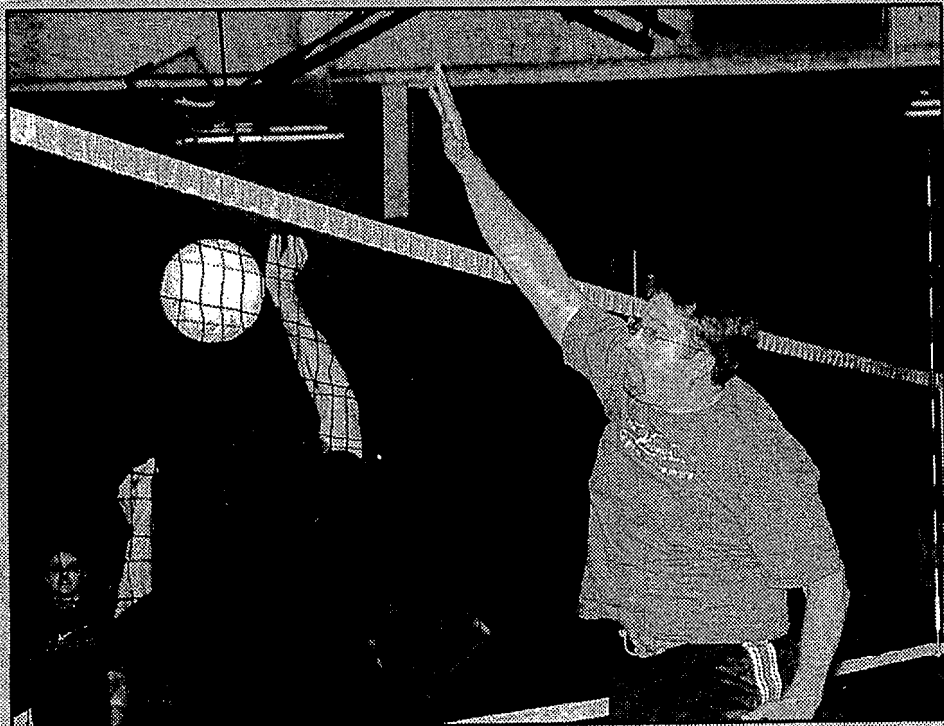
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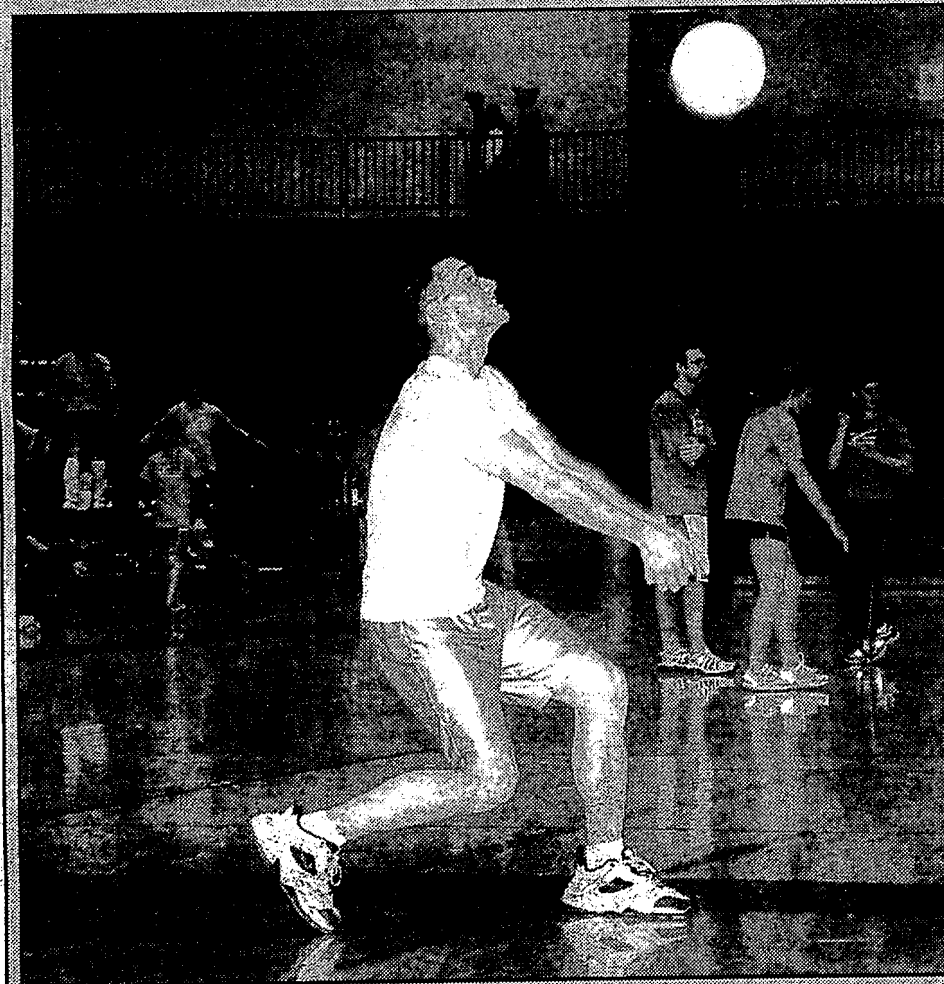
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(6287)

More from the Clarkston Volleyball Tournament



Troy Luke spikes the ball over the head of Howard Address.



Nick Hagewood returns a serve. After his team was eliminated from the tournament, Hagewood acted as announcer for the remaining games.

Clarkston students wonder

BY ANDREW DUPONT
Clarkston News Staff Writer

Several local students displayed their creativity and imaginations as part of the Michigan PTSA Reflections program, which allows students to express themselves creatively through multiple artforms.

Students first enter the program through their schools, and move on to regional, state and national competitions. However, the primary purpose of the reflections project is not competition, but rather to encourage students to experiment with different forms of self-expression.

There are four categories to choose from – literature, visual art, music and photography – in four divisions by grade level – primary, intermediate, middle-junior and senior.

Each year's competition has a different theme, with the 2005-06 one being "I wonder why...?" Students could creatively express their search for the reasoning behind anything through a song, painting, essay, photograph or other form.

Students had between September and November to complete their projects. At the school level, local social workers, artists, librarians and others visited schools to act as judges. Winners moved on to Lansing for the State-wide competition on Dec. 1.

Approximately 1,600 students participated in the state level, with judges from all over the state coming to pick winners.

Several local students earned awards and one earned a spot at the national competition in Washington DC.

Local students earning awards were: Dana Pangori, Bailey Lake Elementary, earned an Award of Merit for visual arts in the primary division.

Jacquelyn Gipe, Sashabaw Middle School, earned an Award of Merit for literature in the middle-junior division.

Kelsey Gipe, Sashabaw Middle School, earned an Award of Excellence for literature in the middle-junior division.

Travis Stone, Sashabaw Middle School, earned an Award of Merit for visual art in the middle-junior division.

Rachel Hampton, Sashabaw Middle School, earned an Award of Excellence for music in the middle-junior division. Hampton also won a spot at the national competition.

Haily Kociszewski, Sashabaw Middle School, earned an Award of Merit for photography in the middle-junior division.

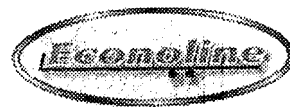
Saran Kim and Ottoavia Molatore, Clarkston High School students, earned Awards of Merit for visual art in the senior division.

The Clarkston News would like to congratulate all participating students for their hard work and devotion.

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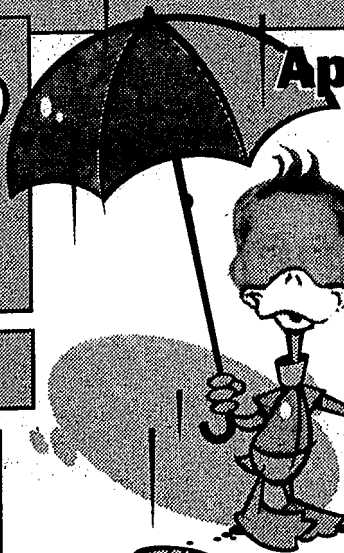
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Letters

Continued from page 6A

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 Thank you to all.

Sincerely,
Todd M. Weiss, Clarkston

Schools can save money on elections

Dear Editor,

On May 2, voters in 26 school districts in Oakland County and most "out-county" districts will be heading to the polls to cast their ballots. While I support our system of democracy, I question the school districts' selection of a May election date.

Under Michigan's consolidated election law of 2004, which I co-sponsored, schools were automatically assigned November election dates unless they formally voted to change the date.

By holding their elections in November, school districts would have reduced or even eliminated their costs because they would have been held in conjunction with city, township and village elections rather than their own stand-alone date.

To legislators' surprise, the vast majority of the school districts in the state opted out of the preferred November election date. Every school board in Oakland County - with the exception of South Lyon Community Schools - voted to change their elections to the most expensive date, the annual May option.

Who is picking up the tab? Taxpayers. We estimate "piggybacked" November elections would save more than \$600,000 in tax dollars per year in Oakland County alone for financially-strapped schools. Statewide, the savings would be an estimated \$5 million or more annually. Think about what that could purchase for our school children - 10,000 computers, over 150,000 textbooks for our kids or schools could hire over 100 teachers.

It is easy to understand the frustration of local clerks and citizens, especially those in communities with uncontested May school elections. Fifteen of Oakland County's 26 districts having elections on May 2 have uncontested races for Board of Education seats.

The goal of consolidating elections was to provide uniformity for voters, streamline the election system and help our schools save money. Instead of multiple polling places, voters now have the same polling place for every election. There is also a consistent system for distributing absentee ballot applications.

Consolidated elections also help prevent school districts from holding "stealth" elections. Previous obscure election dates have resulted in elections where less than four percent of eligible electors cast their ballots.

Schools have argued November elections would upset their budget process, but other officials, from U.S. Congress members to county commissioners and state legislatures, cope very well despite the November timing. It could be an advantage to give school board members several months to understand their district's policies and financial issues before voting on the budget.

In South Lyon, to accommodate the November election, board members' terms were lengthened from four to six years. School districts like South Lyon that have piggybacked their school elections have been able to put those savings into the classrooms and made it easier for voters to have their voices heard. It's clear that schools' early concerns about timing simply haven't been realized.

Today, schools can still opt to change their election schedules to save money and time. If you are concerned about the expense of school elections, you can contact your local school boards to urge them to "piggyback" on to November elections.

Ruth Johnson
 Oakland County Clerk/Register of Deeds

Faded Ink

Clarkston News Sports

Wolves dance between the raindrops to 2-0 start



Dave Brelinski drives home a run in a 4-0 win over Farmington. Photo by Noah Purcell

BY NOAH PURCELL
Clarkston News Sports Reporter

The only team to stop the Wolves down on the baseball diamond this year has been the Overcast High Raindrops.

Amidst having two of their first two games rescheduled because of inclement weather, Clarkston starts the 2006 campaign at 2-0 (1-0). An early feather in the Wolves cap came on April 10, as Clarkston defeated Farmington 4-0 at home.

"I was very proud of the way we played (against Farmington). We played really good in the field. Good defense makes the pitcher a lot better," Clarkston Coach Phil Price said.

The pitcher in question for the Wolves against Farmington was senior ace Steve McIsaac, who pitched a complete game for the win.

"He just got stronger and stronger as the game went on ... He was a bulldog tonight," Price said.

In the win McIsaac struck out five, including the first two batters in the seventh and final inning.

"He's not just a thrower," said Price of McIsaac, whose fastball reaches the low eighties. "He's a pitcher out there, he can throw his slider or his curve for strikes anytime he wants."

Clarkston's bats were hot early as senior Mike Kittle rapped a lead-off single off Farmington ace Burny Mitchum, who Price considers one of the top three or four pitchers in the OAA I.

Kittle was sent back to the dugout as Eric Ogg reached on a fielder's choice, who in turn was brought home by a hit by Dave Brelinski.

"I was really scared about today. I knew (Farmington) was 6-1 coming in. They are a very good pro

Please see Baseball, page 25A

Athlete of the Week – Linda Walker Athletics Secretary keeps Wolves on even keel

BY NOAH PURCELL
Clarkston News Sports Reporter

In respect to the good ship Clarkston sports, Athletic Director Dan Fife may be the captain, but Athletics Secretary Linda Walker is the wind in the program's sails.

While the coaches are in charge of fielding a team in their respective sports, Walker makes sure the Wolves have someone to play, and has done so since 1985.

"You need a good sense of humor, plenty of energy, a mind for details and to keep your fingers crossed," said Walker, who when she was hired became CHS' first athletics secretary.

With over 20 varsity teams, most with junior varsity and freshman offshoots, not to mention a slew of club teams, the Clarkston athletic program is not a small vessel.

When Walker started, there were no freshman sports programs; hockey and swimming were not added until the shift to the new high school in 1998. Even as more sports were added, there are more athletes to keep track of these days.

"Thirty or 40 on the football team was good back then," Walker said.

This year's Clarkston varsity football team alone had nearly 70 players.

"It used to be I knew where everyone was at all times. I had a handle on everything," Walker said. "It's getting a lot more complicated."

Scheduling is perhaps the nastiest tangle Walker straightens out each season. Once the OAA sends the league schedule to Clarkston prior to each sports season, she sprinkles in non-league games and tournaments.

The hardest part of the year is during the change over from the Winter sea-

son to Spring sports.

"People think when you are between seasons it's a slow time," Walker said.

For the Winter and especially the Fall seasons, Walker has at least a few weeks to make sure schedules are set, officials contracted, game workers found, athletes academically eligible, physicals are on file, pay-to-play money collected and tournament fees paid. There is no such setup time afforded before spring as the winter sports award banquets bleed right into the season, amping up the decibel level in the athletic office.

Please see Walker, page 23A



Linda Walker

What Happened What's Next?

• **Baseball:** 4/5 Clarkston 3 Troy Athens 1; 4/7 vs. N. Farmington postponed to 5/10; 4/10 Clarkston 4 Farmington 0 Up next: 4/12 at Rochester High; 4/25 at Kettering.

• **Softball:** 4/5 vs. N. Farmington cancelled; 4/6 Clarkston 10 Kimball 0; 4/8 at Mercy Tourney: 1-2 on the day; 4/10 Clarkston 11, 15 Carmen Ainsworth 1,2. Up next: 4/12 at Holly High; 4/25 at Utica Stevenson

• **Track:** Girls: 4/6 Clarkston 90 Rochester Adams 38; 4/11 at Southfield inc. Up next: 4/25 vs. Troy. Boys: 4/6 Clarkston 67 Rochester Adams 61; 4/11 at Southfield inc. Up next: 4/25 vs. Troy.

• **Soccer:** 4/4 Dondero 1 Clarkston 0; 4/7 Seaholm 1 Clarkston 0; 4/11 vs. West Bloomfield inc. Up next: 4/12 at Adams; 4/25 at Kimball.

• **Tennis:** 4/4 vs. Stoney Creek postponed to 4/26; 4/5 Lake Orion 5 Clarkston 3; 4/8 Warren Mott Quad: First place; 4/10 Eisenhower 5 Clarkston 3. Up next: 4/11 at Avondale inc. 4/12 at Rochester; 4/25 vs. Rochester Adams

• **Golf:** 4/6 Clarkston 185 Lake Orion 207; 4/10 Rochester 196 Clarkston 190; 4/11 at Adams inc. Up next: 4/25 Oakland County Tournament at Pontiac Country Club.



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Walker

Continued from page 22A

"If I pick up the phone and say 'I'm surviving,' that's good because my heads above water," Walker said. "I don't want something not to happen because I screwed up."

But Walker is somewhat blinded by her own dedication to ensuring affairs are in order, for she is quick to greet visitors to the athletic office with a smile as sweet as the colorful candies on her



Linda Walker keeps Clarkston athletics running smoothly. Photo by Purcell

desk. For those who are in search of a little more sustenance, she has had, at times, a barrel of pretzels and always has an answer for questions regarding practice time changes or game location.

"Don't hesitate to ask me something - if I sound rushed I probably am," said Walker, who appreciates the variety and volume of queries she addresses daily.

While the transition period after winter stands out to Walker as the toughest time of the year, the summer is no picnic either. While the kids are out gallivanting around, Walker is putting a year of Clarkston sports to bed.

"When the school year ends you basically have six weeks before football," said Walker, who takes a couple weeks vacation after the final bell of the year in June.

"That gives me one month to close the books and put away everything in an order you can find it again," Walker said.

Luckily, Walker is not completely alone during the school year - for a couple hours a day, CHS building aide Wendy Kato helps around the office.

"I don't know what I'd do without her," Walker said.

She is also thankful for the help the Clarkston Athletic Boosters provide to CHS programs as a whole.

"It's nice that they (the boosters) are there for all the teams," Walker said.

Over her 22 years at CHS, Walker feels she has been fortunate to work under two people who have made her job easier - current Athletic Director Dan Fife and former Athletic Director Paul Tungate.

"Probably the reason I've stayed in this position, even with the heavy work load, is the bosses I've had. They've both

been great people persons while I am more detail oriented," Walker said.

She also is happy to report that 99 percent of the Clarkston coaches are great in keeping in touch with her on important matters. She would not mention who, at press time, was in her one percent doghouse.

"They (coaches) help as much as they can," Walker said. "The biggest thing is communication. If the right hand knows what the left hand is doing, you will be alright."

Walker has seen more than just the athletes hair styles change.

"When I started, a varsity coach would bring out the balls two weeks before the season started and collect equipment a week after the season ended and the sport was done until the next year," Walker said. "Now they have to have year round conditioning in order to compete."

With the rise of AAU and other club leagues, Walker laments a decline in three-sport athletes as students opt to play one sport, year round.

While the job has changed around her, Walker's adopted home town has

Wed., April 12, 2006 The Clarkston (MI) News 23 A

undergone a transformation as well. She moved to Clarkston in 1971 from Detroit after she and her husband decided they enjoyed vacationing here so much they were going to make the sleepy little burg their full time home.

"We felt at the time living in Clarkston was like living up north. Being out here at night was so different. It was so dark. I was wondering where the street lights were," Walker said.

Even as Walker has watched the Village swell and Independence and Springfield Townships explode with housing developments and stores, she still feels the small town atmosphere of the area is intact.

Walker has always enjoyed sports, which is what led her to the athletic secretary position in the first place. She feels she was lucky as her son and two daughters all played different sports in high school, so there was not much competition between them.

While her organizational prowess are invaluable to the Wolves' program, Walker also finds time to lend support from the stands whenever possible - especially in the playoffs.

Check up for CHS gym

While the rest of Clarkston High School gets to enjoy spring break, the gymnasium must prepare for the biggest test of its life. From April 13-21, the CHS gym will be closed as the Hoyle company conducts an inspection.

"Hoyle will be certifying that ev-

erything is in tip-top condition," said Clarkston Athletics Secretary Linda Walker said.

The inspection is the first time the gym has been looked at since CHS' construction in 1998.

The gym will be closed during the inspection.

Grand Opening Specials

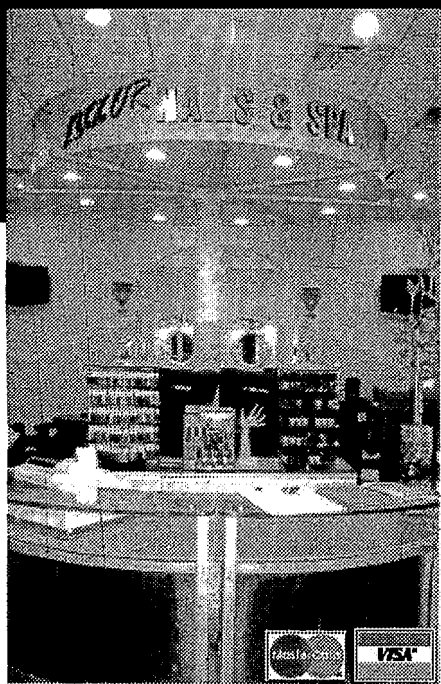
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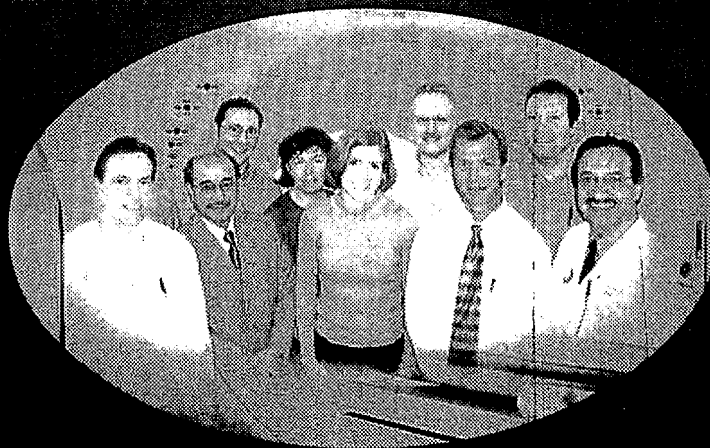
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Softball wallops Ainsworth



Amber Giroux belts an RBI hit in Clarkston's first game against Carmen Ainsworth on April 10. Photo by Noah Purcell

Playing at home on April 10, Clarkston's softball team beat back the opposition from Flint Carmen Ainsworth in both games of a double header.

The Wolves won the first game 11-1 and ran away with the second contest 15-2.

Their record is now 4-2 on the season after a 10-0 victory over Kimball at home on April 6 and a 1-2 showing in the Farmington Mercy Tournament.

Clarkston Coach Don Peters, while well aware of his team's youth, is pleased with the development of the players so far this year.

The Wolves final game before spring break is at Holly High School on April 12. Once school resumes Clarkston plays at Stevenson on April 25.

CHS Tennis wins Mott Quad, falters twice in dual matches

BY NOAH PURCELL
Clarkston News
Sports Reporter

While Clarkston's tennis team has not been forced to reschedule any matches due to persistent rains, the lack of practice time has hurt as the Wolves open the season 0-2.

"You want to play more than you practice, but it would be nice to have a little of both," Clarkston Coach Chaz Claus said.

Clarkston lost 5-3 at Lake Orion on April 5 and was defeated at Eisenhower by the same score on April 10.

"We're coming along developmentally. We have a lot of players who weren't experienced at the flight they are playing. It's nice to see they are coming around," Claus said.

The silver lining in the clouds so far this season was the team's performance at the Warren Mott Quad, as the Wolves took seven of eight flights to win the tourney on April 8. Lakeland, South Lakeland and Warren Mott were the other three teams involved.

Clarkston's match at Avondale on April 11 finished too late for this edition of *The Clarkston News*. The Wolves play at Rochester High on April 12 in their last action before spring break. They resume play on April 25 at home against Rochester Adams.

The tennis team did not manage to dodge all of the April showers as their match at home against Stoney Creek was postponed to April 26.

Local ballers shine at states



The U14 Mustangs girls travel basketball team, featuring players from Clarkston, Ortonville and Waterford, went 28-14 this season and qualified for the state finals March 25-26 in Midland. They finished fifth in their division in their first appearance at states. (Back row, left to right) Brianne Brady, Liz Goffis, Shelby Davidson, D.J. Kwasiborski, Rachael Reis, (front row) Krystin Spina, Sarah Privette, Kayla Brimacombe, Kaylie Guellec, Sara D. Autremont, and Shelby Fernandez make up the team. Photo provided

Duffers aiming for states again

The Wolves golf team stumbled a bit on April 10 and lost 196-190 to Rochester High.

"We didn't play like we should have against Rochester," Clarkston Coach Larry Sherrill said.

The team's record is now 1-1 on the season as on April 6 Clarkston defeated Lake Orion

185-207.

"We played really well as a team that day," Sherrill said.

Senior Jackie Schram was the Wolves low scorer in both matches, shooting a 42 in Clarkston's win and a 45 in the loss.

Schram highlights a deep and experienced team on the

course for the Wolves this year.

"My top six players from last year are back this year," Sherrill said. "It's tremendous that this is (Schram's) fourth year playing varsity. She's very experienced, that helps, and she's a leader on the team."

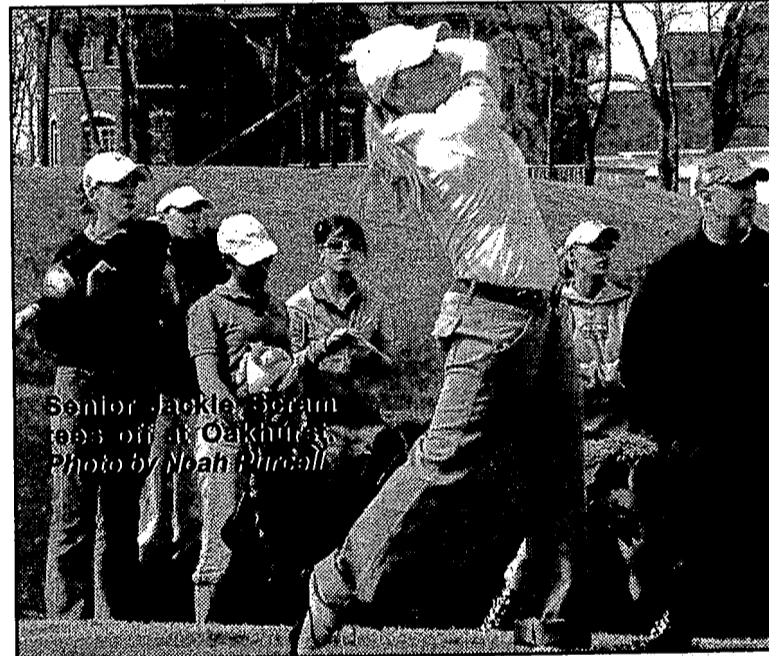
Sherrill expects the team to qualify for the state finals again this year, where last year the Wolves finished 11th. He also expects Clarkston to be near the top of the OAA I. Citing teams like Seaholm and Lahser, Sherrill feels the Wolves' league will be one of the toughest in the state.

Clarkston's match at Westwynde Country Club against Rochester Adams on April 11 finished too late for this edition of *The Clarkston News*.

Sherrill was not looking forward to the "huge traps" and "tough greens" the course at Westwynde features.

The Wolves do not dust off the clubs again until April 25 for the Oakland County Tournament.

- NOAH PURCELL



Senior Jackie Schram tees off at Oakland County. Photo by Noah Purcell

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HIRING CERTIFIED/EXPERIENCED MECHANICS

Baseball

Continued from page 22A

-gram. They were second in the league last year," Price said.

Drew Howard knocked in an insurance run in the sixth inning to give the Wolves a 4-0 cushion late in the game.

Price sees Clarkston competing for the league title this year as the Wolves return all but three individuals who played significant roles on last year's team.

"I really, really feel as long as we don't beat ourselves in the field we can beat anybody," Price said.

In terms of the OAA I, Price feels the team to beat is Lake Orion.

"I think Lake Orion is a lot like us. I don't know if they have any true superstars. They just play solid baseball," Price said.

Price is looking to Kittle and Brellinski for leadership at the plate.

"They're going to set the tone offensively," Price said.

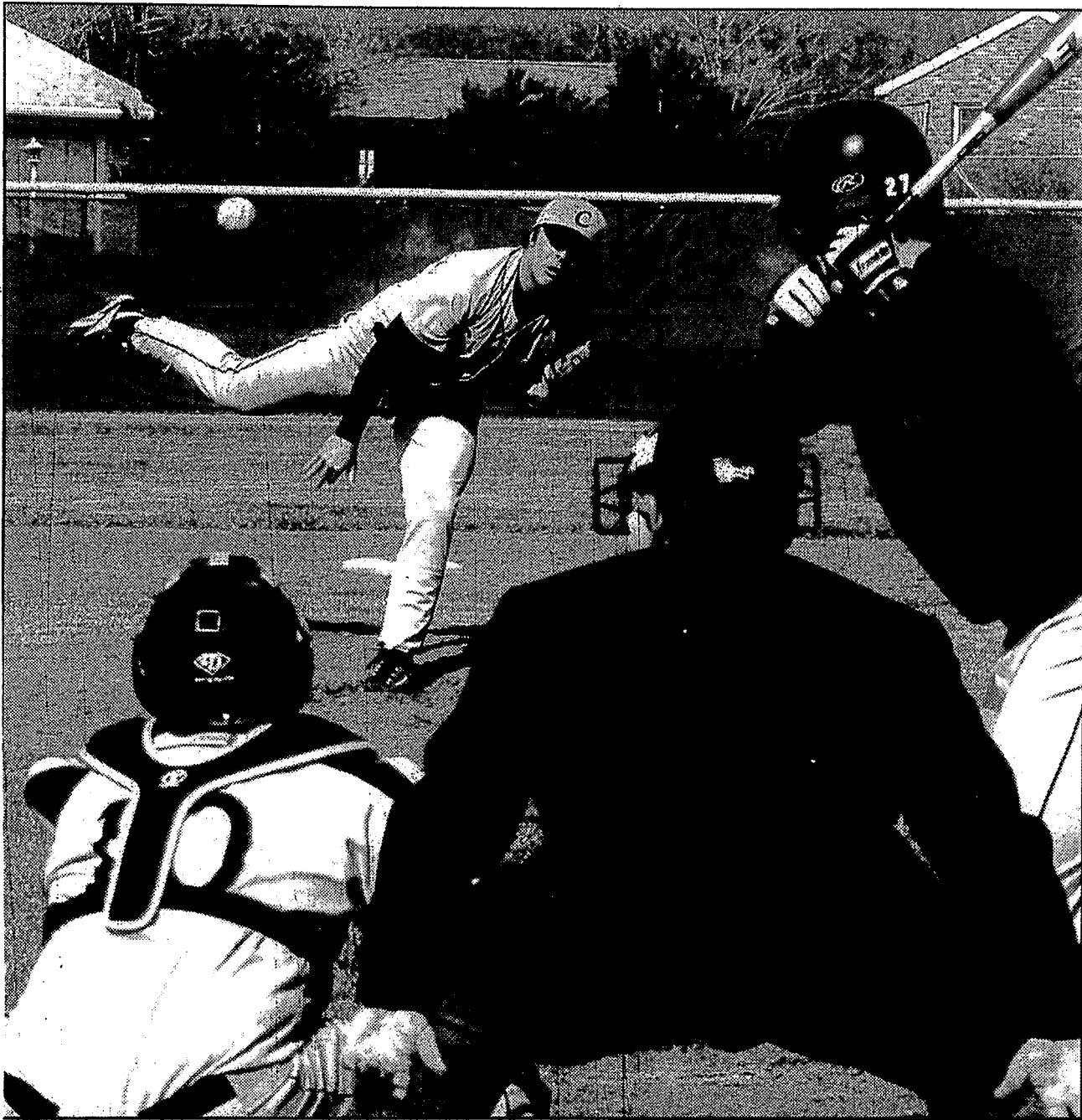
The Clarkston coach also feels that with catcher Brian Phillips, McIsaac on the mound, Ogg in center field and shortstop Steve Vanderheyden the Wolves are strong up the middle defensively.

In Clarkston's first action of the season, April 5 at Troy Athens the Wolves defense was on display in a 3-1 win.

McIsaac struck out 12 while allowing one earned run for the win. Josh Hall went 3-for-4 with a run scored and an RBI and Ogg went 2-for-3 with a run scored as Clarkston scored two in the seventh inning for the win.

What was supposed to be a busy April will make for a clustered May as Clarkston's home game against Rochester Adams on April 4 is now set for May 12. The Wolves home affair with North Farmington on April 7 also had to be moved because of gloomy skies - the two teams play May 10.

Clarkston's final game before spring break is at Rochester High School on April 12. The Wolves resume play on April 25 at Waterford Kettering.



Steve McIsaac is 2-0 on the season and has struck out 17 batters while allowing one run this year. Photo by Noah Purcell



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Survey

Continued from page 1A

"I think it will save the cost of having to vote on it."

"I think it is a wise decision. It saves time from going to the ballot every couple of years and allows the schools to focus on education."

One responder, who did not state an opinion for or against the millage, gave this summarizing statement: "It's wrong for the right reasons."

The reasons behind not supporting the millage were broad. Some responders cited the sluggish Michigan economy, while others focused upon length and amount of the millage.

"Lots of mills - lots of years."

"If 18 mills are needed and required, then we should be voting on an 18 mill proposal. Increasing the millage amount to cover the Headlee Amendment is a blatant attempt to circumvent a voter-approved amendment to the State Constitution."

"I think it is against the law."

"Too long, should be illegal."

"This is in true violation of the Headlee Amendment we worked so hard to get passed. The school administration should be ashamed of themselves."

Looking at salaries

When asked if Clarkston teachers are paid fairly, a large majority said they are and other even voiced the

opinion they are underpaid.

Following is the break down of responses: 26 said paid fairly, 1 said paid proportionately (to other districts or states), 16 said are under paid, 2 said are over paid, 5 are uncertain (did not give opinion) and 2 did not respond.

"Yes. However, as with other companies, retirement costs and healthcare costs are consuming the majority of the budget. Modifications to these benefits (in line with corporate restructuring) needs to be addressed at the district and state level."

"It is the district's reputation, not the salary, that draws new teachers."

"Very fair. The health benefits and time off benefits are huge."

"For a little over half a year - plenty."

"What teacher in any state is paid fairly?"

Although many responders felt Clarkston Schools administrators were paid fairly (proportionately), very few felt they were under paid.

Here is the break down of survey results: 23 said paid fairly, 4 said proportionately (to other districts or states), 3 said under paid, 9 said over paid, 11 are uncertain (did not give opinion) and 2 did not respond.

"Overly fair."

"Yes, but could be more accountable."

"Fair only to themselves. They are paid too much, and are an unnecessary burden on an already overburdened system."

"Yes. In fact, they should be taking cuts like upper management in the big three."

Regardless their stance on salaries, a good portion of responders (24 surveys) said they were uncertain what teachers and administrators are paid.

Many individuals used the phrases "I think," "I'm not certain but" and "I believe."

"I have only seen a generalized statement of what Dr. Roberts income is, and have never seen anything in print about the rest of the administration."

"Who knows what they make... never published."

"While I am not aware of all individual salaries, what I know of seem high. If the paper would publish a salary schedule it would be helpful."

With this thought in mind, *The Clarkston News* asked the school district for salary and benefit break downs for employees. Please look in this week's issue for the story on Reporter Andrew DuPont's findings, page 1A.

A glance ahead

Please look in the next edition of *The Clarkston News* for Part II of the survey results. *The News* will review whether or not responders own non-homestead property and how these individuals view non-homestead property taxes.

Also, *The News* will provide a listing of questions asked by responders concerning the Clarkston School district.

Orco

Continued from page A5

Investments presented the following information on the residential development:

- The single family homes will sell for between \$290,000 and \$310,000 with lot sizes of 55 by 110 feet. The deeper lots will be 130 feet.

- The townhomes will be two stories and sell for \$230,000 to \$250,000. There will be four to eight units per building.

- The condos will sell for \$200,000 to \$210,000 and all will be located along I-75.

Due to time constraints, public comment will take place during the continuation of the hearing.

The next step

On April 27, the Independence Township Planning Commission will consider two different rezoning requests for the property.

Orco's request changes the zoning from single family residential to planned shopping center and highway commercial. The rezoning request is part of the commercial development proposed by the company.

The second is a rezoning initiated by the planning commission based on recommendations from Township Planner Dick Carlisle's Sashabaw Corridor Study. The study suggests a zonings for local commercial, planned shopping center, office service one, office service two and multiple family.

The Planning Commission begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Clarkston High School Auditorium.

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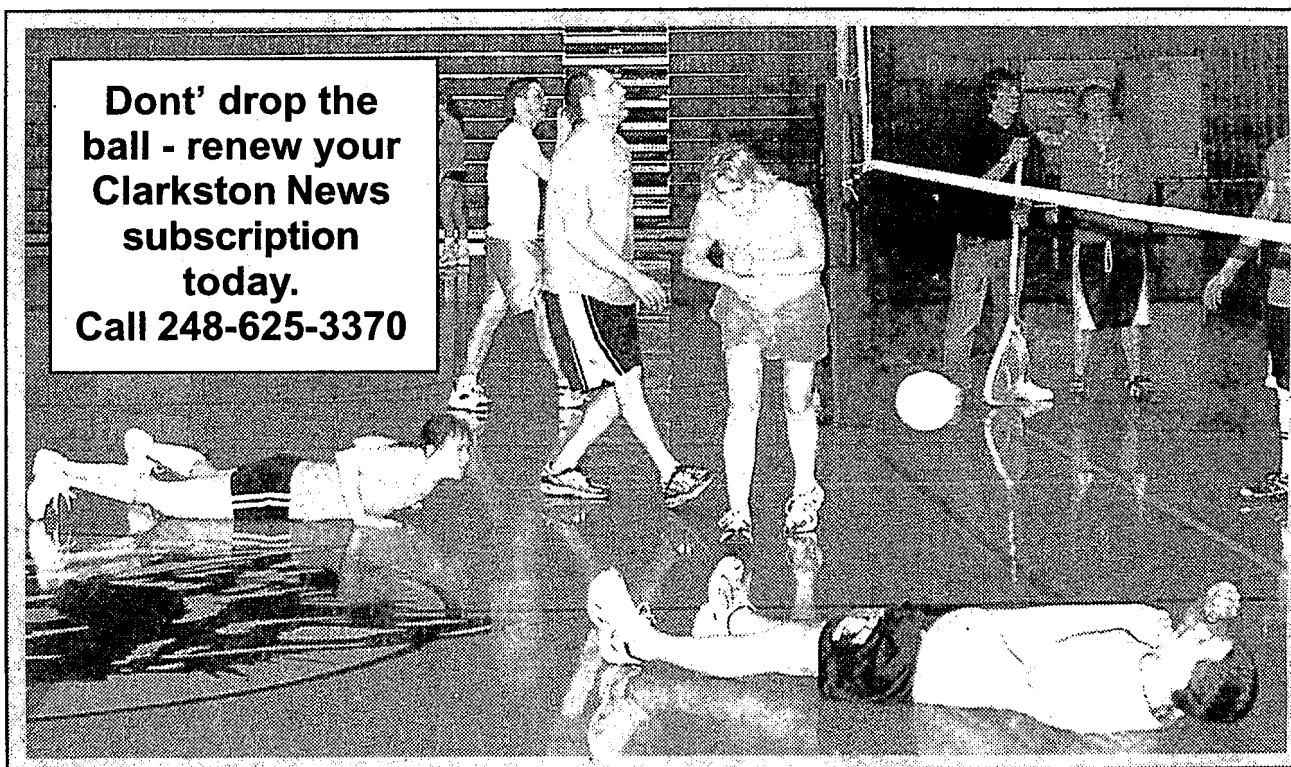
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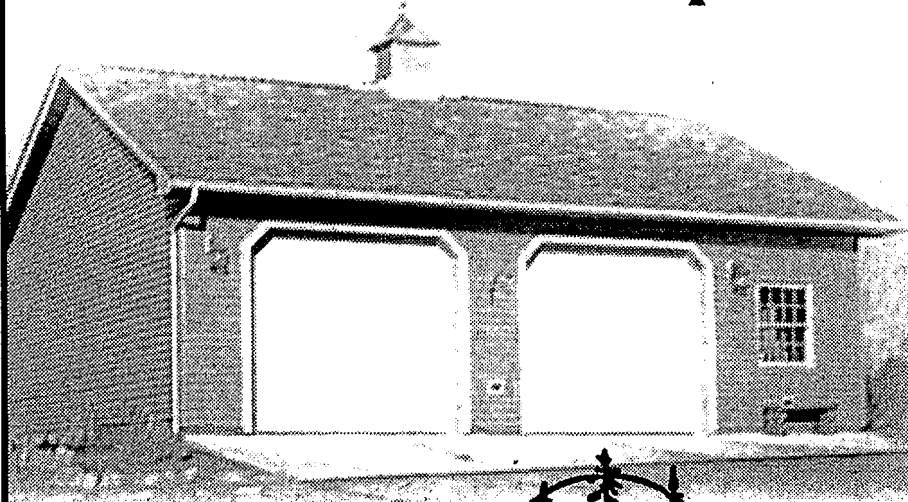


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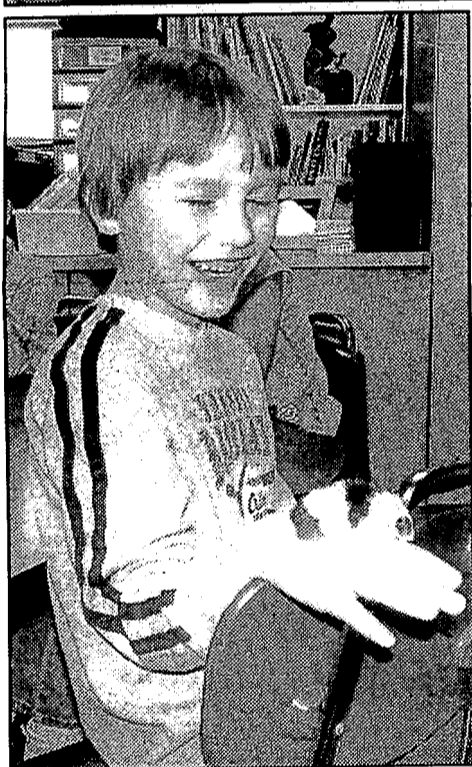
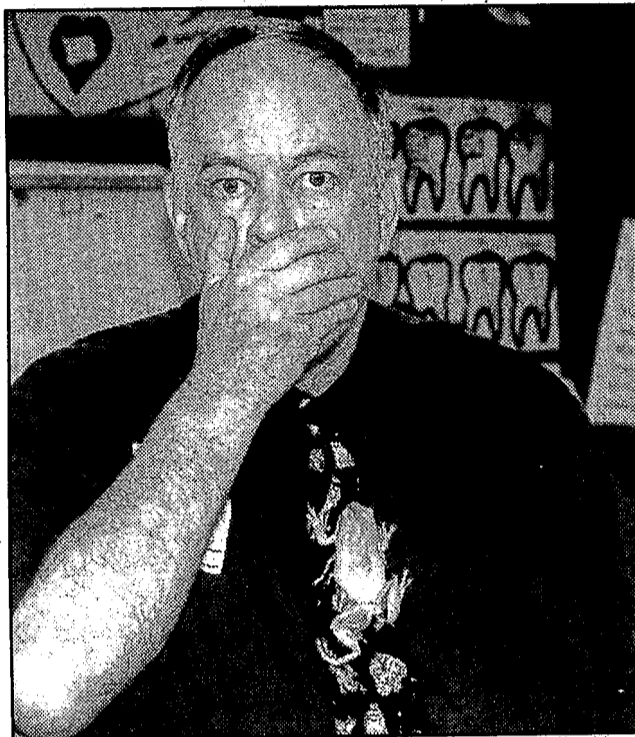
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Cute and creepy crawlers visit PKE

Paul McCormack, an Adrian resident, visited Pine Knob Elementary on April 7. McCormack brought a variety of animals for an interactive and educational experience with first graders throughout the day. Pictured below, McCormack misplaced Woody the tree frog, can you see where he went?



How soft... Ryan Shubart discovers why this Chinchilla is named Cotten.



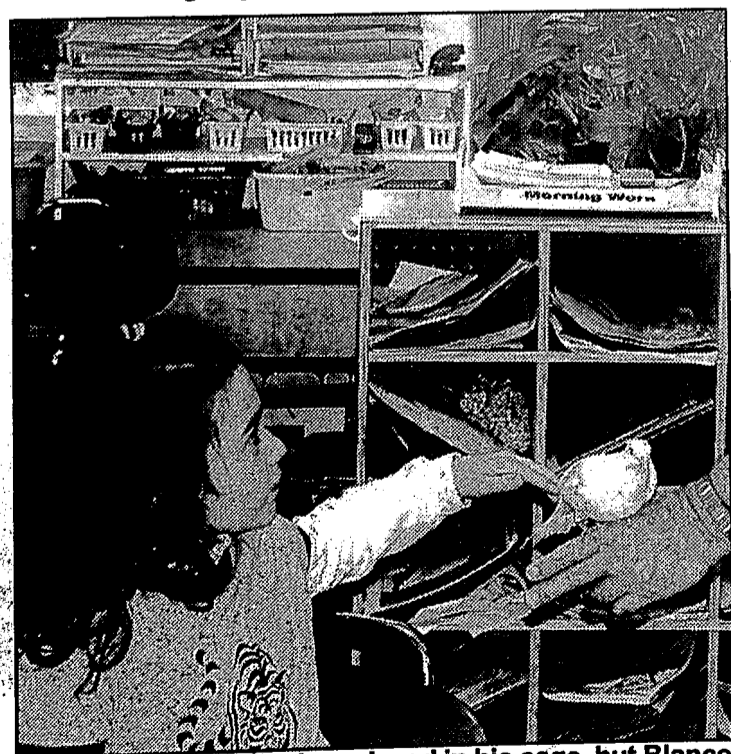
Grayson Miller discovered mice were not scary. In fact, Oreo the mouse made him laugh by tickling his arm.



Chow-Chow the blue-tongued skink smells strangers by stinking his tongue at them, which did not work as well for Matthew Williamson or first-grade teacher Ms. Smith.



Photos by Andrew DuPont



He seemed to laugh when placed in his cage, but Blanco the dove was calm and quiet when McCormack presented him to Gabrielle Valliath.



Only the brave are quick to volunteer to hold Noah the Boa Constrictor, and Cody Viers jumped at the chance.

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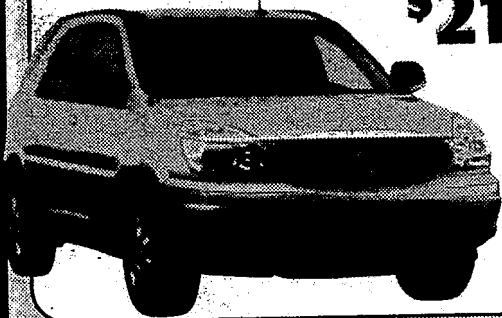
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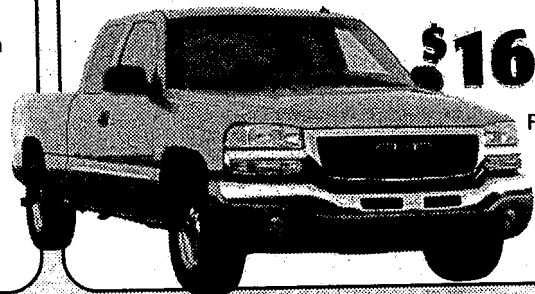
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Ext Cab 4WD**

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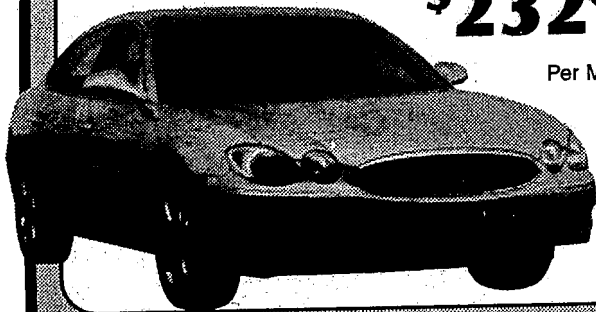
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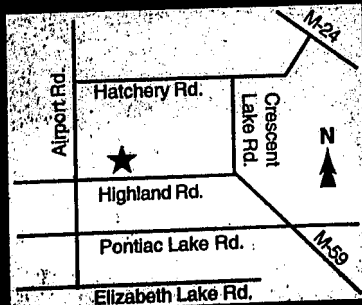


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