

## New west wing getting ready for business

by Andrea Sokalski

In a letter written in 1829, J.W. Goethe described architecture as "frozen music." When looking at the new west wing of the Oakland County Courthouse, this same

image is evoked; it is a new movement in harmony with the other pieces.

This accomplishment involves the concerted effort of over 1000 people, from the architects of Mimoru Yamasaki Associates (with between eight and ten consultants on the project), to general contractor John M. Olson (and approximately 60 subcontractors), to over 100 firms (five to 10 people each). The request for reconstruction was implemented by Oakland County's

Building Authority: Chairman Aleck Capsalis, Ken Strobel, Kevin Oeffner, C. Hugh Dohany and Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, whose facilities management staff, headed by Dave Ross and facilities engineering, assures the wing is built correctly. County employee involvement covers every aspect of what is

being called the "Oakland County West Wing Extension and Renovations," including grass, flowers, floors and even light bulbs. Field and operations engineers, as well as inspectors, are all part of the facilities management engineering staff; the construction engineer is Alex Skoczylas.

Supported by the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, the project budget is \$17 million, of which \$11 million is put toward actual construction. With proper budget managing, there is expected to be a \$1 million surplus. The remodeled west wing houses the circuit court administrator, assignment clerk, mediation rooms, reimbursement office,

jury assembly, Friend of the Court and the Treasurer's Office. The new west wing extension will house the Oakland County Law Library, the Research Library, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the Oakland County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, as well as other county divisions. A representative from the



The picturesque west wing extension to the courthouse will soon open for business.

See **NEW WING / P-7**

## County employees honored for their years of dedicated service

The 12th Annual Retirement and Service Award Program was held on June 10 at the Main Event in the Pontiac Silverdome. In 1982, the office of the County Executive and the Personnel Department developed the first in-house Retirement and Service Award Program in recognition of employees who had made a career of public service. Approximately 350 people were welcomed to the 1994 program by C. Vincent Luzi, Director of Personnel. Following a luncheon, County Executive L. Brooks Patterson congratulated all

award recipients, and along with Deputy County Executives John Grubba and Doug Williams, presented gold watches to those employees and retirees who had completed 25 years of service with Oakland County. Employees receiving gold watches were Donna Bigelow-**Accounting**; Sandra Gay-**Animal Control**; Lynn Allen, Elaine Kelley-**Clerk/Register**; Lela Ricks, Phillip Strong, Bernard Taylor-**Children's Village**; B. Jill Palulian-**52nd-2nd District Court**; Keith Attar, William Eckstein, Gerald Sweetland-**Drain**;



Dave Ross (left), Director of Facilities Management, congratulates Juan Flores on receiving his 20-year service award plaque.

# PATTERSON / *Person to Person*

I have a mixed bag of items to offer up for your consideration this month.

For starters, get ready because an original Rogers & Hammerstein production is coming to Oakland County. A Ken Rogers (Economic Development) and Rich Hammerstein (Accounting) production that is. Had you going for a minute, didn't I?

Anyway, the thought occurred to me that with 4000 employees, Oakland County government probably has some pretty talented individuals who are just itching to show their stuff. Thus the idea of a talent show was born. Details are yet to be worked out, but if you think this is something that might be fun and you'd like to participate or volunteer in some way, give Vince Luzi in Personnel a call at 80542.

Direct deposit seems to be catching on with county employees. At last check, about 43 percent of you were having your twice-monthly paychecks deposited in the bank. We estimate that if everyone used direct deposit, the county could save \$25,000 annually, not to mention the cost saving in terms of man hours and production. Not a lot of money, but every little bit counts in this day of shrinking bottom lines. Another benefit of direct deposit is you won't have to worry about Channel 4 catching you with a hidden camera standing in line waiting to cash your paycheck.

Speaking of Channel 4, I assume many of you saw their series which showed some Road Commission workers napping on the job, just standing around or generally goofing off. While such "do-nothings" should be exposed and held-up to ridicule, I hasten to add they are not a true reflection of county workers, at least not the ones I've seen

in action.

An overwhelming majority of our employees are dedicated, hard working people who often go above and beyond what is required of them. They don't watch the clock or nap at their desks.

In fact, I know from personal experience that many of our secretaries work very long hours, but don't put in for overtime. Although entitled to breaks, many keep working because they are committed to getting their work done. Often times on weekends, when I come in to catch-up on some work, I see lights burning in other offices. It would be very wrong to indict all county employees for the failings of a few.

We have the best employees in the state. I'll stack them up against any other county employees anywhere, anytime and anyplace.



**L. Brooks Patterson**  
*Oakland County Executive*

## Oakland County sweeps NACO awards

Oakland County walked away with seven achievement awards at the recent National Association of Counties annual conference which was held in Clark County, Nevada.

In this, the 25th year of the achievement award, Oakland County was honored for a variety of innovative programs including the Business Roundtable Survey Research, the State Homestead Tax, the Annual Community & Economic Development Report, the Annual Property Tax Sale, the Wall Street Journal's Special Section, Computer Software Training and the Community & Minority Affairs Department Executive Briefing.

Below is a brief description of each of the award winning programs:

**Business Roundtable Survey Research**- This research document is intended to provide members of Mr. Patterson's Business Roundtable with an instrument they can use to analyze information and draw their own conclusions on various issues. The survey is also designed to help Roundtable members complete their assigned task of formulating recommendations which will improve Oakland County's business climate.

**State Homestead Tax**- Oakland County took the lead by developing a user friendly tax form which allowed homeowners to file their Homestead Affidavits quickly and efficiently. As a result, more than 90 percent of the county homeowners entitled to a tax break were able to file their

forms in a timely manner. In contrast to the forms sent out by the state, Oakland County's were already filled in. All residents had to do was put their social security numbers on the forms, sign and return them.

**Annual Community & Economic Development Report**- The annual report is a year-end review which examines how the various divisions of Community & Economic Development served their clients, how many were served, what services were performed and how funds were used to serve Oakland County. The report is also used to describe conditions in the community and the economic environment each division serves. It also demonstrates to the Board of Commissioners the department's importance, which is essential in maintaining support for its functions.

**Annual Property Tax Sale**- This is a mandated procedure which allows people to purchase delinquent taxes in return for a lien on a specific piece of property. Each year taxes which are three or more years delinquent are offered at the sale. The property owner has at least 18 months to redeem the taxes and the only way for the property owner to lose title to the property is to neglect paying the taxes.

**Wall Street Journal's Special Section**- Oakland County became the first county in the nation to use a special, 12-page supplement to reach a million readers in 14 states. This was a partnership between Oakland County government and the business community, designed to attract business

# Tribute To A Colleague And Friend

by Commissioner Lawrence Pernick (D-Southfield)

*Editor's note: County Commissioner Lawrence Pernick and the late Dennis Aaron were not only long-time colleagues on the county commission, they were good friends who graduated together from Detroit Central High School in 1949.)*



**Dennis M. Aaron**  
former Oakland County  
Commissioner

He believed the saddest words in the English language were, "I wish I had," and County Commissioner Dennis Aaron always went ahead and did the things he dreamed about.

When he died on July 6 at the age of 63 of an apparent heart attack, Denny's life had been a full one—overflowing with love of family, friends, his work and his community.

A Democrat who represented parts of Oak Park, Royal Oak, Huntington Woods, Pleasant Ridge and Southfield—Denny was one of the original county commissioners elected in 1968, and he served all but one term since.

He was an attorney who recently moved his law offices to Southfield after many years in Detroit, the city where he was born. He loved the ambiance of working in the downtown area and the people he met there.

His commuting experience made

Denny an outspoken advocate of public transit and an opponent of urban sprawl. He was a champion of economy in government, and he made it an annual tradition to criticize the county's budget surplus and question why, if the county had so much money, the millage couldn't be reduced.

Early on he saw the value of the 911 system and fought for its use throughout the county. He was always deeply concerned about the poor and disadvantaged as well as community mental health issues.

Serving on the board's personnel, health and human resources committees, Denny was also a special liaison to the Oakland County Sheriff's Department. He was active with the National Association of Counties and served on its criminal justice committee.

Denny was blessed with charm and a warm and witty approach to life which made him a favorite among both Democrats and Republicans. According to board chairman, Larry Crake, "He was a man you could trust anytime with anything. His word was his bond."

And Commissioner David Moffitt, recalls the time Denny leaned over to give his new-born son some practical advice, namely, "Live like a Republican, but vote like a Democrat."

Denny used his sense of humor to enlighten as well as amuse—and he could summarize a situation in a way that would leave people both laughing and thinking.

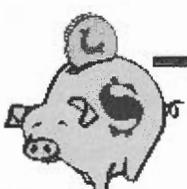
"He was full of funny anecdotes and his integrity was impeccable," adds Commissioner Lillian Jaffe Oaks, "With all his fun, he could be very serious and always worked for the betterment of people."

Denny had a special zest for life and was always making plans for the future. A world traveler, he led group tours to many places and was planning a white water rafting trip for seniors when he died. Suzette Vogt, County Board Chief of Administration, remembers that "He and his wife were always traveling and every time he came back from some place he would bring us all these little souvenirs."

He was also an opera fan who for many years delighted in getting walk on roles in Michigan Opera Theater productions such as "La Boheme" and "Aida." "He'd just get such a charge out of being in the production and around such talented people," said his son, Brian.

Denny leaves a great legacy of love and achievement to his family—Marilyn, his wife of 32 years, and his three sons, Charles, Jonathan and Brian.

To the rest of us, who also loved him, he leaves the legacy of his warmth, his wisdom and his humor. As County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said, "He will be sorely missed."

TABULATIONS & TOTALS FOR 1994	
	<b>Casual Day Contributions</b> <b>\$11,561.29</b>
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	<b>Employee Suggestion Program</b> <b>83 Suggestions</b>
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	<b>Direct Deposit</b> <b>42.4%</b>

## Gerald Poisson Profile

The person on the front line when the county is hit with a lawsuit or a department needs a legal opinion is the Corporation Counsel. Occupying that seat is Gerald Poisson, whom Mr. Patterson plucked from the ranks of the Prosecutor's Office when long-time Corporation Counsel Jack Hays retired last year to go into private law practice.

Poisson graduated summa cum laude from the Thomas Cooley Law School in 1981 and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Michigan State University in 1985.

After graduating from college, Poisson was hired by the U.S. Treasury Department, where he served as a special agent in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and was assigned to the office in Indianapolis, Indiana.

"I did that for just two years," recalled Poisson. "I had a lot of fun...it was a tremendous experience."

Prior to joining the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office in 1981, Poisson worked as a law clerk for an attorney in Lansing and as a senior law intern with the Prosecuting Attorney's Coordinating Counsel in the State Attorney General's office.

Deciding he didn't want to spend the rest of his life as a treasury agent or in private practice, Poisson applied for a job in the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office in 1981. Brooks Patterson, who was Prosecutor at the time, liked what he saw in Jerry and hired him. Poisson spent the first eight years as an assistant prosecutor, handling such things as case evaluation and preparation, misdemeanor trials and felony preliminary examinations and trials. He finished off his career in the Prosecutor's Office as Chief Assistant Prosecuting Attorney under Prosecutor Richard Thompson.

"Brooks was great to work for," said Poisson. "He gave me a lot of responsibility and expected me to execute and do a good job."

When Mr. Patterson came calling again in January, 1994 and offered Poisson the Corporation Counsel's job, Poisson felt he was ready for a change.

"I had decided that I wanted to look for something else," recalled Poisson. "I'd been in law enforcement for eighteen years and the outlook you get on life starts to get a little depressing."

Poisson likes the challenges his new job brings. He's



**Gerald Poisson**  
Corporation Counsel

now confronted by new and different practices of law with which he must become familiar. There's also a big change in his role as supervisor. In the Prosecutor's Office he was responsible for the day-to-day operations of an office that employed 174 people, 98 of whom were attorneys. Now he oversees the work of a much smaller staff, which provides legal advice to county offices and employees.

The one thing Poisson really looks forward to everyday when he comes into work is the variety of issues with which he is forced to deal.

"One day you might be working with a Community Mental Health situation," said Poisson. "The next day you might be with George Kuhn in the Drain Office working on transferring a title to a sewage treatment plant. You never know what's going to come in the door that day and I do like that."

Spare time for Poisson is an interesting concept. He and his wife have six children—five girls and one boy and all are very active in school sports. Four of his daughters are soccer fanatics and his son is a snow boarding and skiing enthusiast. But there's also baseball and track in the spring and basketball in the winter, which means Poisson and his wife, Peggy, spend much of their spare time transporting the kids between the sports activities and home.

Poisson and his wife are family centered and they really enjoy the children. He believes society has gotten away from traditional family values.

"I think we as a society have spent so long tearing down institutions we have reeked havoc with the things that are really important," said Poisson. "I was fortunate to come from a good family, where my parents took the time and effort with their children. I had fine role models. I feel bad for people that don't have that."

What makes Poisson mad? Sloppy work and people evading responsibility are high on his list of no-nos.

"When I find a mistake on a pleading, I don't like that," said Poisson. "We all make mistakes, I don't expect anybody to be perfect. But I do expect people to own-up to their short comings."

At 41-years of age, Poisson is still a young guy with years of productivity ahead of him. But just for fun, I asked him what his epitaph might be. He thought for a moment, then a grin began to spread across his face.

"You know when you go, you can't take it with you," chuckled Poisson. "So I've decided not to go."

NACO, cont.

and investment to the area. The editorial content consisted of six stories which focused on Oakland County's high-tech business opportunities and quality of life features. Advertising, which accounted for 50 percent of the content, paid for the supplement.

□**Computer Software Training**- Since its inception in November, 1990 more than 1000 Oakland County employees have gone through the Computer Software Training program. Many students who have gone through the program claim they were able to learn more in just two days than after going

through a more lengthy computer course elsewhere. A hands on approach is used which enables students to learn computer skills more quickly and efficiently.

□**Community & Minority Affairs Department Executive Briefing**- This document sets forth a specific set of goals for establishing a network of cooperation between the various councils, committees, outreach programs, county officials and the community they all serve. The briefing outlines how the Community and Minority Affairs Department can be used as a vehicle to impact the community.

For some unknown reason the onset of fall makes me very reflective and nostalgic. Perhaps it's the change of seasons, although I don't feel the same way when winter turns to spring or spring gives way to summer.

But as the warm summer days fade into memory and are slowly replaced by the hint of the approaching cool fall nights, my mind harkens back to a time when everything seemed easier and simpler.

My memory comes alive with assorted snapshots from the past: football on Friday nights and the sound of cleats on the cement as I walked to the bus that would take the team to the game; the tightness in my stomach as the lights of our opponents football field became visible in the distance; the post-game ride back; the anticipation of seeing my girl and the grey autumn sky which signaled that winter was not far behind.

This time of the year conjures up other images as well from a time long ago: sitting around the dinner table with family; slaving over homework in my bedroom; watching my favorite TV shows—"Ben Casey," "My Three Sons," "Have Gun Will Travel" (dates me, huh!); registering for college and wondering what I was going to do with the rest of my life.

Some of those times seem like yesterday. Where did the years go? Once it seemed as though life stretched endlessly in front of me. Now I'm struck by how quickly it has

all gone by—unrelenting time that waits for no man. Not that the end is imminent or that I'm ready to be mothballed. But it doesn't seem all that long ago I was receiving my college diploma or watching my youngest son (now 21 years of age) being born.

The funny thing about the past, at least with me, is that your memory has a tendency to filter out the bad things, so that you're left with only the good memories. Yesterday seems to have taken on a certain sweetness that comes with time.

Once I viewed life with a detachment, a sort of whimsical nonchalance. I took very little seriously, least of all myself. Maybe that's the advantage of being young. You can afford the luxury of being aloof and somewhat irresponsible, because no one expects much of you and life seems forever.

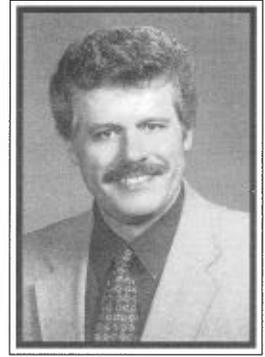
With age, however, my perspective on life and living changed. Responsibility replaced frivolity and my once razor sharp sense of humor gave way to the serious side of my nature. I began to take life too seriously. The daring, reckless days of my youth were gone, forever.

At some point I started to worry about growing old, probably when I realized that more of my life was behind than ahead of me. But then certain things happened that convinced me, while I couldn't do anything about getting older, I

could do something about getting old. The death of my dad, the suicide of a good friend's eldest daughter and the near sudden and almost premature demise of another

close friend, caused me to do some soul-searching and re-evaluating.

Eventually, I came to the dramatic conclusion that since life is temporal and not forever, I should do everything in my power to live life to the fullest. In other words, I decided not to get bogged down with insignificant things that in the total scheme of things don't mean a hill of beans. Make each day count. Do your best, then say the hell with it. Don't take things so seriously and don't be afraid of change or new things. Hey, in a hundred years it won't matter anyway. Let me leave you with one of my favorite sayings and something I try to live by: God grant me the courage to change the things I can, the serenity to accept the things I cannot and the wisdom to know the difference.



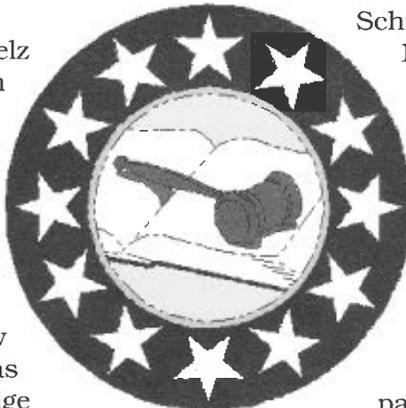
**Bob Dustman**  
Media and  
Communications  
Officer

## Oakland judge addresses State Bar of New Mexico

by Margaret J. Garvin

Oakland Circuit Judge Gene Schnelz was the featured speaker at a symposium for the State Bar of New Mexico held at the University of New Mexico Law School in Albuquerque. He spoke about the benefits that legal assistants can provide to the bench and bar.

Judge Schnelz chaired the Michigan State Bar task force which ultimately integrated the legal assistants and law office administrators into the State Bar as affiliate members. For his services, Judge



Schnelz received the first Mentor Award in 1991 given by the State Bar of Michigan Legal Assistant Section.

Judge Schnelz recently finished a series of lectures for the Michigan Judicial Institute regarding a form of alternative dispute resolution in divorce cases. This process of facilitation reduces animosity and hostility in divorce cases and develops a more amicable relationship between parties. Such an approach benefits the parties and their children as well.

# County employee returns to work following year-long battle with leukemia

On July 14, 1993, Sandy Greenacre, an Accountant V in the Water & Sewer Department, got some news that turned her world upside down. Doctors told Sandy she had contracted an acute form of Leukemia, which would almost certainly kill her if she did not receive a bone marrow transplant.

"I was completely devastated by the news," recalled Sandy. "I was only 35 years old and thought I was going to die."

But fate stepped in. Sandy's sister, who works in Equalization, turned out to be a perfect bone marrow match. The transplant gives Sandy a 50 percent chance of a long term cure for her Leukemia. Without it, there would have been little chance of survival.

Shortly after being diagnosed with Leukemia, Sandy underwent a month-long series of chemotherapy treatments at Pontiac St. Joseph's Hospital. Then she was transferred to University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor, where she received another round of chemotherapy treatments because the disease did not go into remission the first time around.

Sandy eventually was allowed to go home for six weeks before undergoing her bone marrow transplant on November 12, at Harper Hospital in Detroit. She was released from the hospital on December 18 and recuperated at home until returning to work on June 17.

At this writing, Sandy has only been back on the job for about a month and she readily admits it's tough getting back into the swing of things after being off for nearly a year. By the same token, she's glad to be back because as she puts it, "this is my life."

Because of her illness, Sandy has to be careful of certain

things. She has to stay out of the sun, she can't get over-tired and she can no longer pursue one of her favorite past times—gardening. Sandy explains that the bone marrow transplant has made her susceptible to infection, so she has to keep her hands out of the soil, which is laden with bacteria.

Doctors will also be monitoring her condition very closely. She'll go to her own doctor for regular monthly checkups and this month she will return to Harper Hospital for her nine month checkup.

There is no history of Leukemia in Sandy's family, so she really doesn't know why she might have gotten the disease. However, there is a strange irony which might help explain things.

In October, 1992, Sandy bought a house and just 10 months later she was diagnosed with Leukemia. Neighbors told her that the people who lived in the house back in 1976 had a daughter with Leukemia—strange, but true.

During her year-long battle with Leukemia, Sandy received support from family, friends and fellow workers. She especially wants to thank employees in the Accounting Division, the Drain Commissioner's Office, Water and Sewage Operations, Information Technology and Facilities Management for the cards, flowers and gifts they sent her during her illness. In fact, Drain Commissioner George Kuhn even let her hold a fund-raiser for the Leukemia

Society in the Public Works Building.

Next February, Sandy will have been employed by Oakland County government for 18 years. She spent her first four months with Facilities & Operations, but then she was transferred to the Accounting Division where she serves as a supervisor.



Sandy Greenacre, Accounting Supervisor, is all smiles now following her successful year-long battle with leukemia.

## Long-time county employee appointed to challenging new position

George J. Miller, who started with Oakland County government in 1979 as a Child Care Worker at Children's Village, has been named manager of Community Corrections, which is a new state-funded program.

In his new role, the 38-year-old Miller will oversee the operations of a \$2 million program which seeks alternative methods for dealing with non-violent offenders, rather than putting them in jail.

Miller explained that the focus of community corrections is rehabilitative, not merely punitive. Miller pointed out that many people are arrested for relatively minor crimes such as shoplifting. Such individuals, according to Miller, might be given a fresh start by providing them with employment training, rather than carting them off to jail.

Miller's career path has been steady and impressive. He spent two years working with delinquent, neglected and abused youths at Children's Village, before being promoted to direct the Probate Court's youth assistance program in Novi.

In 1985 he left to become a Substance Abuse Analyst in the Oakland County Health Division. His area of responsibility

included developing comprehensive plans for substance abuse treatment, rehabilitation and prevention services.

Just three years later in 1988, Miller's outstanding performance earned him another promotion. This time he was named supervisor of planning and evaluation for the Health Division.

Now Miller is faced with the most daunting challenge of his career, as he begins administering the highly complex and somewhat controversial Community Corrections program. But Miller appears up to the task and eagerly looks forward to what lies in front of him.

"I was ecstatic when told I got the job," said an obviously thrilled Miller. "I've always wanted this kind of challenge, especially being able to create something from the ground up. It's always been a dream of mine and I'm very excited about the opportunity."

Miller, a Royal Oak resident, earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Detroit and a Master of Arts Degree in Guidance and Counseling from Oakland University.

## Library units relocating

by Phillis Jose

This month, three units of the Oakland County Library will move to the newly completed west wing addition of the Courthouse. Additionally, the Library Board has determined that when the move takes place, the Reference Library unit will be renamed the Research Library. The new name was selected to better represent the availability of materials in the library's collection.

The Research Library and the Library for the Blind & Physically Handicapped (LBPH) will be housed on the first floor of the new facility. The Law Library and Library Administration will occupy the second floor along with Corporation Counsel. The Research Library is currently located on the first floor of the Executive Office Building; the Law Library is on the fifth floor of the Courthouse; and the LBPH is currently housed at the Farmington Community Library/Farmington Hills Branch.

Relocating to the new facility will enhance the services provided by the various units in several ways. Each unit will have more floor space and shelving, increasing the amount of information accessible to patrons. Some internal operations will be centralized, allowing the staff to spend more time developing the collections and assisting patrons. Staff will also receive training in the operations of all three units, providing more flexibility to the library's operations. Additionally, through a project developed by the Department of Information Technology, the units will be electronically linked insuring multiple access points to information contained in the various collections and improving the level of communications among the units.

It is estimated that each unit will be closed for seven to ten days for the move.

NEW WING, cont.

office of Prosecuting Attorney Richard Thompson presented a positive view. "We're looking forward to using the facility, and it appears Oakland County has done an excellent job. Operations should be much smoother." Project manager Gregg Doty supports this view, seeing the new west wing as a great functional advancement to the complex, affording public and county personnel a better library

system and a more efficient and accessible prosecuting system due to the adjoining buildings. "Users and operators have all been actively involved, and we have been receiving positive reactions about both look and function," emphasized Doty. Certainly, the addition of 314 parking spaces for the complex is a high note.

The move into the wing takes place in six stages, beginning this month.

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## Bright ideas net employees cold cash

Five lucky Oakland County employees are a little richer after winning \$50 each for submitting their award winning ideas to the Employees Suggestion Program.

Donna Curiak, a clerk at Oakland/Pontiac Airport, received her mini-windfall for suggesting the county enter into a concession agreement to collect landing fees. It's estimated Donna's idea will save taxpayers about \$13,500 annually.

Roberta Underwood, Senior Committee Coordinator for the Board of Commissioners, will have some extra spending money as a result of her suggestion to establish a check list which departments can use when submitting ideas to the board for approval.

Patricia Van Landuyt, Accountant II in the Accounting Division, was rewarded for suggesting the elimination of duplicate record storage between the Accounting Division and the Treasurer's Office. The suggestion will free up space in Record Retention and save staff time.

Kimberly Ball, Auxiliary Health Worker in the Health Division, pocketed \$50 for her suggestion to post surveillance signs in the south Health parking lot as a way to discourage vandalism.

Mary Anne Altenburg, Public Health Nurse in the Health Division, feathered her financial nest by suggesting the county provide identification for employee owned cars that are used in the field, so that the public knows that they are on official county business.

All those winning \$50 and certificates of recognition are now eligible for one of the Grand Prizes which will be awarded at the County Executive's Christmas party in December.



The \$50 winners in the Employee Suggestion Program are (left to right) Pat Van Landuyt, Roberta Underwood, Kimberly Ball, Mary Anne Altenburg and Donna Curiak. Each of these ladies is now eligible for one of the big prizes awarded at the end of the year.

## Roger Smith Profile

As Oakland County's Solid Waste Planning Manager, Roger Smith may not have one of the more glamorous jobs, but it has certainly proven to be one of the most important.

With landfills bulging at the seams and constant criticism from the environmental groups concerning the health risks of incineration, Smith has learned to walk a tightrope on the issue of solid waste.

Through his efforts and those of his staff, Oakland County has developed dramatic revisions to its solid waste plan, which 59 of the county's 61 communities have approved. Historically only 45 communities have climbed on board such efforts in the past.

"We were under some pretty tough pressure because of the DNR's deadline," said Smith commenting on the difficulty of the effort. "Just being able to pull it off was really something, especially since my staff dwindled from four people to one, me, during the process."

While Smith is pleased and proud that his department, was able to develop a solid waste plan, he realizes there is more work to be done.

"The way the state law in Michigan is arranged the solid waste plans have to be revisited from scratch every five to seven years," said Smith. "Solid waste is such a changing, volatile issue that I think the law is written wisely, so that you have to stay on top of it."

Prior to coming to work for Oakland County in June, 1989, Smith served as director of Public Services for the city of Southfield. In that capacity he was involved in all the traditional public service issues such as streets, water and sewers, engineering, planning, building inspection, facility maintenance, motor pool and communications. But he also got his first taste of the solid waste issue.

"In the late 1980's I was south Oakland County's leading critic against the county's solid waste efforts," recalled Smith. "I was just raising an awful lot of fuss and eventually the county invited me to sit down with its experts to show them what my perspective was."

Smith said that in time former County Executive Dan Murphy and former Board of Commissioner Roy Rewold came around to his way of thinking on the solid waste issue. This led to a job offer, which Smith accepted.

When Brooks Patterson became County Executive in January 1993, Smith was one of four department directors who were asked to remain on the job.

"He (Brooks) and I chatted and he asked me to stay on, so I did," said Smith. "I've enjoyed it...he's a fun guy to work for."

Smith confesses that somewhere during his journey through life he's become a self proclaimed computer nut. I can attest to that, because I saw at least three different kinds of computers in his office. Smith also has a well equipped computer set-up at home, which he utilizes



**Roger Smith**  
Solid Waste Planning  
Manager

while his wife watches her favorite TV programs.

"You can do so many things so fast on these machines [computers]," noted Smith. "It's something that becomes second nature to you."

The most exciting part of Smith's job has been meeting new people, something he thought he would dread. With solid waste being such a hot issue, Smith spends a lot of time speaking to a wide assortment of groups all over the county and he says he gets a "kick out of that."

When he's not out and about explaining solid waste issues or sitting at one of his many computers, Smith likes to put on his waders and do a little trout fishing.

"I haven't had the chance to do it in the last year, but I will be heading up to the Au Sable River near Grayling later this summer,"

said Smith. "I like wading in the streams. It's a solitary pursuit, which I enjoy because it gives me an opportunity for reflection."

Smith is a born and bred Michigander, growing up in the Lansing area before moving to the Detroit area in 1969 when he took a job with a consulting firm. In 1970, Smith became Southfield's first traffic engineer.

Like most of us, Smith has his heroes and role models. He greatly admires Roger Penske of auto racing fame, because of his talents as an engineer-manager. Speaking of auto racing, Smith is an avid fan of NASCAR. He follows the sport on TV and when he was younger, went to a lot of races. In fact, two years ago Smith and his brother packed up all their sons and sons-in-law and spent a weekend watching the races at Watkins Glen.

Smith describes himself as bullheaded, straight forward and honest to a fault. He doesn't like to dance around an issue. His motto: You have something to do—do it! Tell it like it is.

Although certainly premature, when asked how his epitaph might read, Smith sat back in his chair and chuckled—"If he had only slowed down a bit."

## ART EXHIBIT AND BROWN BAG LECTURE

The County Galleria will be host to "Carpe Annum: A Calligraphic Exhibition" from the Michigan Association of Calligraphers from September 6 through September 30.

On September 15, Dr. Richard Brooks from Oakland University's Department of Philosophy will come to the Computer Services Auditorium to talk about "Things That Go Bump in the Night." The lecture begins at noon. The Brown Bag Lecture Series is a partnership project of the Oakland County Cultural Council and County Executive Brooks Patterson.

For more information about exhibits and lectures, call the Office of Cultural Affairs at (810) 858-0415.

# Golf Outing Raises Money for Children's Village

by Greg Alessi

Over 200 golfers participated in the fifth annual Children's Village "Spring Scramble" golf outing, held May 20 at Heather Highlands in Holly.

Beautiful weather and laughter punctuated the course and clubhouse as golfers teed it up for the youngsters of Children's Village.

Over \$11,000 was generated—money that impacts programs and activities directly involving Children's Village youth.

To the fifty plus county employees who participated in this wonderful event—as well as others who supported the event—we extend a big thank you.



"The Fearless Foursome" enjoy the fifth annual C.V. "Spring Scramble" golf outing. From left, Al Dittrich, Denny McQuiston, L. Brooks Patterson and Ed Smith.

## RETIREMENT, cont.

Gregg Doty-**Facilities Engineering**; William Olivich-**Facilities Maintenance & Operations**; Jack Wiegand-**Friend of the Court**; Linda Carey, Ruth Wagner, Barry Wyatt-**Health**; John Greenhill, Paul McFarland, Mary Phelps-**Probate Court**; Roger Allen, Frederick Herman, M. Eileen Stubbs, Barbara VanWagoner-**Sheriff's Department**; Robert Gorham-**Support Services**; C. Hugh Dohany-**Treasurer**. Retirees receiving gold watches were Richard Kolehmainen-**Accounting**; James Brennan-**Board of Commissioners**; Novella Fowler, Mary Velte, Susan Williams-**Community Mental Health**; Carol Childers-**Computer Services**; William Mawhinney-**Drain**; Barry Eriksen, John Taylor-**Sheriff's Department**; Delois McMillan-**Treasurer's Office**. Not in attendance at the program but receiving gold watches this year were retiree Robert Best-**Children's Village**; Diane Brown, James Mero-**Facilities Maintenance & Operations**; and Kristine Vollmar-**Friend of the Court**.

Department Heads and Division Managers presented plaques to recent retirees and employees who have been a part of county service for 20 years or more. Ruth Hayes, recent retiree from **Accounting**, was presented a plaque for 35 years of service in addition to a retirement plaque. Also, Larry Artes-**Facilities Maintenance & Operations** retired on December 31, 1993 with 35 years of service. Receiving a plaque for 30 years of service were J. David VanderVeen-**Director of Central Services**; James Porter-**Drain**; retiree Gary Armstrong-**Friend of the Court**; Marilyn McAllister, Melvin Strickland, Jr.-**Probate Court**; Russell Bremer-recent retiree from **Sheriff's Department**; and Arthur Halsey-**Treasurer's Office**. Other employees/retirees with 30 years of service not in attendance at the program include Judy Caldwell-**Accounting**; Jay Reinke-**Children's Village**; Thomas Dequis, Ronald Thomas-**Drain**; Edward Stout-**Sheriff's Department**.

There were 94 employees and eight retirees completing 20 years of service between June 1, 1993 to May 31, 1994. Those in attendance at the program were Candace Frederick, Pamela Muhal, Linda Ross-**Accounting**; Al Arnold-**Animal Control**; Barbara Sargent-**Auditing**; John Guisbert-**Aviation & Transportation**; John Girard, Bonnie Milton-**Children's Village**; Gordon Lambert-**Community Development**; Norbert Birnbaum, Gene Harris, A. Sue Hubbard, Patricia King, Marguerite Lachenauer, Jane Mellen, Yvonne Schuermann, Pamela Verch-**Community**



Dr. Tom Gordon, Director of Human Services, appears very pleased as he presents a 20-year service award plaque to Mary Holloway.

**Mental Health**; Mary Lyons-**Computer Services**; Douglas Buchholz, John Burnell, Therese Dohany, James Isaacs, Jr., Ronald Wintland, Stephen Zemoyan-**Drain**; L. Craig Whetstone-**Equalization**; Janet Artes, Juan Flores, Richard Johnston, Jim Tillman-**Facilities Maintenance & Operations**; Linda Delph, Vicki Shelton-**Friend of the Court**; Gina Carden, Barbara Collison, Lila Salomon, Katherine Socia-**Health**; Marilyn Baker, Gloria Buchanan, Cynthia Neef, Karen Smith-**Parks & Recreation**; Catherine Shallal-**Personnel**; David Ajamy, Janet Chiappelli, Gary Gasowski, Garry Pullins, Patricia Stapleton-**Probate Court**; Jami Allen, Caron Eno, Thomas Seaman, Patricia Trulu, Berry Zeeman-**Sheriff's Department**; Daniel Cavanaugh, Daniel Marquis, Gary Slinkard-**Support Services**.



Robert Daddow, Director of Management and Budget, presents a 35-year service award and retirement plaque to Ruth Hayes.

## CHANGING PLACES/CHANGING FACES

### TRANSFERS

**Kim Middleton**, Budget Division, transferred from Information Technology. Kim represents the first satellite operation for the Budget Division. Her office is located in the Computer Services Building.

**Cheryl Wilson**, Budget Division, transferred from Information Technology. She will handle Facilities Management, Drain Commissioner's Office and Capital Improvement Programs.

**Laurie Van Pelt**, Community Mental Health, transferred from the Budget Division 06-94.

**James Hess** transferred from Management & Budget/Accounting to Information Technology on 06-27-94 as a User Support Specialist.

**Tina Ramey**, transferred from Personnel to Information Technology on 06-20-94 as a User Support Specialist.

**Rachel Shymkiw**, transferred from EMS/Emergency Management to Information Technology on 06-13-94 as a User Support Specialist.

**Michael Hall**, transferred from the Mailroom to EMS and Emergency Management on 06-25-94 and also was promoted to EMS Communications Supervisor on 07-05-94.

**Sue Roberson**, Facilities Management Safety Unit, transferred to Equalization on 03-12-94.

**James Rizzi**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, transferred to Sheriff's Dept. on 02-25-94.

**Donna Thornberry**, transferred from the Sheriff's Dept. to Water & Sewer Accounting on 06-27-94.

**Dodie LaMarte**, transferred from Health to the new Community Corrections Department on 08-15-94, as Secretary to George Miller.

### PROMOTIONS

**Bob Archambeau**, Facilities Management Heating Unit, was promoted to General Maintenance Mechanic on 03-19-94.

**Mark Baker**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Skilled Maintenance Mechanic II on 04-02-94.

**Sam Cowell**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to General Maintenance Mechanic on 02-19-94.

**Don DesNoyers**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Maintenance Planner II.

**Don Drussel**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to General Maintenance Mechanic on 03-05-94.

**Juan Flores**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Skilled Maintenance Mechanic II on 04-02-94.

**Brad Gill**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Skilled Maintenance Mechanic II on 04-02-94.

**Tim Hoskins**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to General Maintenance Mechanic on 02-19-94.

**Hazel Jensen**, Facilities Maintenance Administration, was promoted to Technical Assistant on 05-28-94.

**Dan Kelly**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Maintenance Laborer on 03-05-94.

**Robert Larkin**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Maintenance Supervisor II on 02-05-94.

**Barbara Mullens**, Facilities Management Custodial Unit, promoted to Mobil Unit Custodian Worker on 02-12-94.

**Harold Palm**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Central Stock Attendant on 02-19-94.

**Kurt Taylor**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Maintenance Supervisor II on 07-23-94

**John VanCamp**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, promoted to Maintenance Planner I on 02-19-94.

**Wendy Zuzelski**, Facilities Management Engineering Unit, was promoted to Engineer Aide I on 05-28-94.

## ARRIVALS/DEPARTURES

### NEW EMPLOYEES

**Prentiss Malone**, Budget Division, joined Budget 05-94. He is assigned to the County Executive, Management & Budget and Community Economic Development Departments.

**Lisa Harvey**, Budget Division's newest intern.

**Shane Murphy**, Budget Division, formally from Information Technology, is temporarily working on a special project.

**Robert Aubin**, Drain Commissioner's Office, hired on 07-18-94 as Construction Inspector.

**Mark Davis**, Drain Commissioner's Office, hired on 07-18-94 as Engineering Aide.

**Kevin B. Duhonich**, Drain Commissioner's Office, hired on 05-31-94 as Construction Inspector I.

**Steven A. Korth**, Drain Commissioner's Office, hired on 06-20-94 as Civil Engineer II.

**Michael McMahon**, Drain Commissioner's Office, hired on 06-06-94 as Civil Engineer II.

**Jerome Silagyi**, Drain Commissioner's Office, hired on 07-18-94 as Civil Engineer.

**Loretta Pethick**, EMS and Emergency Management Division, hired on 06-27-94 as General Clerical.

**Brett Battishill**, Facilities Management Engineering Unit, hired on 07-11-94 as Student Engineer.

**Paul Hunter**, Facilities Management Engineering, hired on 05-27-94 as Manager.

**Gary Jackson**, Facilities Management Custodial Unit, hired on 02-22-94 as Custodian Worker II.

**Donald Keyes**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, hired on 06-20-94 as General Maintenance Mechanic.

**Dale Malone**, Facilities Management Telephone Unit, hired on 07-11-94 as Telephone Communications Technician.

**Patricia Nevison**, Facilities Management Safety Unit, hired on 05-14-94 as General Helper.

**Greg Pollina**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, hired on 06-06-94 as Skilled Maintenance Mechanic I-Painter.

**Kent Powers**, Facilities Management Heating Unit, hired on 05-31-94 as Boiler Operator.

**Lisa Saylor**, Facilities Management Safety Unit, hired on 05-14-94 as General Helper.

**David Taormina**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, hired on 06-13-94 as General Maintenance Mechanic.

**Herman VanDenEsschert**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, hired on 05-23-94 as Skilled Maintenance Mechanic I-Painter.

**Mark Waker**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, hired on 06-06-94 as General Maintenance Mechanic.

**Stephan Yates**, Facilities Management Custodial Unit, hired on 02-28-94 as Custodian Worker II.

**Dan Young**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, hired on 06-06-94 as General Maintenance Mechanic.

**Steve Murphy**, Radio Communications, hired on 05-31-94 as a Radio Technician.

#### **RETIREMENT**

**Steve Sendec**, Facilities Management Royal Oak Market, retired after 22 years of service on 04-22-94.

#### **FOND FAREWELLS**

**Diane Heinbokel**, EMS and Emergency Management Division, bid a fond farewell on 06-24-94.

**Greg McRobb**, Facilities Management Safety Unit, left the county on 05-27-94.

**MaryAnn Collier-Powell**, Facilities Management Safety Unit, bid a fond farewell on 03-30-94.

**Margaret Porreca**, Facilities Management Secretary III, bid a fond farewell after 16 years with the county on 05-28-94.

## **CELEBRATIONS**

#### **WEDDINGS**

**Donna Mahan**, Facilities Management Custodial Unit, married James Carrel on 05-20-94.

**Dan Scott**, Facilities Management Maintenance Unit, married Denise on 06-08-94.

**Sandy Godschalk**, Facilities Management Administration, married Ted Middleton on 7-22-94.

**Bob Runyon**, Radio Communications, married Laura Stites on 04-30-94.

#### **BIRTHS**

**Tina Barton**, Computer Services, and her husband, Mark, have a new son, Taylor William, born on Mother's Day, 05-08-94.

**Kevin Keesling**, Custodial Unit-Courthouse and his wife, **Pam**, Records Retention, announce the birth of their second child, Theresa FayAnne, born 03-04-94.

**Pat Kenealy**, Radio Communications, and his wife, Dawn, have a daughter, Michelle Marie, born on 05-17-94.

## **MEMORIAL**

**Dorothy Rosenberg**, 62, of White Lake Township died June 26 of Lou Gehrig's disease. She worked nearly two decades as secretary and office coordinator for former Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy. Dorothy will be greatly missed by all who knew her. Memorials are suggested to: ALS of Michigan, 8521 Lyndon St., Suite 200, Detroit, MI 48238.

## **THE SWAP SHOP**

**FOR SALE:** 3 Bedroom Bungalow - "Doll House" with William's Lake privileges - only \$79,900. Leave message at 666-4485.

**FOR SALE:** Helix SC8000 Stepper/Climber. \$100. Leave message at 752-6601.

**WANTED:** Treadmill, two-person programmable, automated incline. Contact: Ann Wanetik 80929.

**WANTED:** Basketball backboard/basket and ball for younger wheelchair bound nursing home residents. Contact: Ann Wanetik, 80929.

**WANTED:** TV video game with cassettes (ie. Atari) for Nursing home residents. Contact: Ann Wanetik 80929.

**WANTED:** Child-size basketball hoop and stand for wheelchair bound nursing home residents. Contact: Ann Wanetik 80929.

## **American Red Cross blood drive**

The next American Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled for Thursday and Friday, September 15 & 16 in room 322 of the Executive Office Building, 10 a.m. through 4 p.m. Blood donor pledge cards will be available from attendance clerks.

Donors could just as easily be called "miracle workers". After all, miracles don't just happen. People make them happen. There are thousands of people in our community every day who depend on blood and blood products to survive. They depend on you. Be part of a miracle; give blood!

## **COUNTY INFORMATION HOTLINE!!! 858-1022**

The Information Hotline you get your choice of news:

Press **1** for Employee Information

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

Press **3** for Arts & Cultural information

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

## **TELEGRAPH**

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# EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

By Phil Gové

One of our Employees of the Month for May is **Gary Slinkard**, Operations Supervisor for Materials Management.

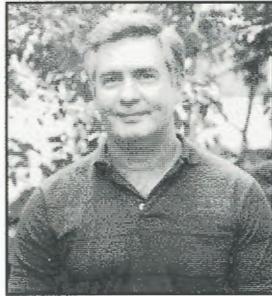
Slinkard began his career with the county in 1968 washing cars at the County Garage for \$1.25 an hour. Today, he supervises all warehouse operations within stationery stock and the central stores.

Slinkard oversees the ordering, receiving and delivery of everything from paper clips to frozen goods to all county divisions, as well as many other municipalities in the county.

Daniel Marquis, Manager of Materials Management, says Slinkard's unique responsibility of dealing with the brokers who sell goods to them merits him this award nomination. "He has reduced the cost of commodities to county departments by sizable amounts," Marquis said.

Slinkard directly supervises the property records section where new office furniture and equipment is prepped and tagged for identification. He also helps run the county auction, which takes place twice a year.

Slinkard's father was a supervisor at the central stores in the late 1950s and early 1960s.



**Barbara Weberman** recently received the Employee of the Month Award. She's the laboratory supervisor in the Health Division laboratory, where she has worked since 1987.

For Dr. Carolyn Bird, Chief of Health Division Medical Services, the decision to select Weberman for this honor was an easy one to make.



"She's an extremely capable employee and has always been extremely helpful to everybody within the division," said Bird.

The Health Division laboratory is where clinical lab work is performed for the different areas within the division. It is also an environmental health lab used to test water samples.

Weberman is responsible for monitoring the quality control for all the testing in the lab. She sets up procedures for testing and works alongside her staff to complete the work.

Weberman attributes much of her success to those she oversees. "I am blessed with the most wonderful staff," she said.

Away from work, Weberman enjoys spending time with her three teenagers.



Pictured (l to r) are Veit, Taylor, Armstrong and Bertram.

As the Oakland County Information Technology Department continues its efforts to assist county personnel through the implementation of the Distributed Computing Network and Office Automation Program, four employees were recently recognized as Employee's of the Month for their leadership in organizing key aspects of the program.

Honored were **Jim Taylor**, Chief of Distributed Computing Technology; **Kevin Bertram**, Supervisor of Distributed Computing Process Improvement; **Pam Armstrong**, Supervisor of Office Automation Support Services; and **David Veit**, Chief of Technical Services.

"These individuals were recognized collectively for their effort in designing and implementing a comprehensive, user-oriented approach to employee empowerment through the use of personal computers, networking and training services. While many personnel have contributed to this successful project, these professionals led the cross-functional teams formed for these important efforts," said Paul Funk, Information Technology Director.

The Department of Public Services Employment and Training Division has selected **Debbie Lake**, Secretary, as its Employee of the Month.

John Almstadt, Manager of the Employment and Training Division discussed one of Lake's most valuable qualities as an employee. "She's always thinking," said Almstadt. "A lot of people just react to their work. She thinks about the consequences of her actions and the impact they will have on the division. It's a rare quality among employees, but one I think she has in abundance."

Lake's analytical approach to her work is particularly important due to the great deal of discretion her job requires. She is the point of contact for many of the calls to the office and the response the public gets from her is key to the function of the division.

In addition to coordinating all of the administrative functions of her division, Lake is also the recording secretary for the Private Industry Council. In this role, she's responsible for preparing agendas, taking minutes of the meetings and disseminating motions and back-up materials to council members.

This past May, Lake and her husband, Roy, completed a tour of Massachusetts and Vermont with stops at Cape Cod and the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

